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The Message
and the
Message-Bearer

Mennonite church. Board of
" Missions and Charities

The Message
and the
Message-Bearer

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Setting forth in simple form

The teachings of the Word of God and the character of the people who should make this message known to the world

Published under the auspices of the

MISSION COMMITTEE

of the

Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities

"The entrance of thy words giveth light."

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PREFACE

This is the second in a series of books written for use in mission study classes or in other circles devoted to the great cause of carrying the Gospel of Christ into all the world. It was conceived and written under the conviction that the two important things in connection with obedience to our Savior's great command to "preach the gospel to every creature" are a full-Gospel message and a fully consecrated and enlightened message-bearer; a message embracing "all things whatsoever" Christ commanded us to do, and message-bearers who are living examples of what the miracle of God's grace will do for fallen man.

We trust that every reader will get the full force of the message. Let the words of our Master, "Teach all nations....to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you," keep ringing in our ears. And let us not lose sight of our great duty to keep this message ringing in the ears of others. As the character of the message-bearer usually gives the hearer an idea of the character of the message, it is of highest importance that the messengers of the "glad tidings of salvation" show by their lives and labors that they believe in the message which they bring to others.

We acknowledge our indebtedness to members of our Publishing Committee and others who have

so generously assisted in preparing this volume, and we send it forth with the prayer that it may be the means in the hands of God to awaken many a soul to purer motives, more earnest living, and faithful service. Mission Committee.

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PART I

THE MESSAGE

WHAT SHALL OUR MESSAGE BE?

Every child of God shares in the responsibility enjoined upon us in our Savior's great commission to the Chrsitian Church: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature."

What shall we preach? "The Gospel," is Christ's reply. What is the Gospel? "All things whatsoever I have commanded you" (Matt. 28:19 cf. Mark 16: 15). Briefly stated, our mission is to teach "every creature" among "all nations" to observe everything which Christ taught His followers to do. The Gospel of Christ is the LIVING MESSAGE which the Christian Church is commanded to proclaim in every land and to all people. Every intelligent being should know:

1. That God created man in His own image—pure, intelligent, happy, holy.

2. That this image was lost in the fall of man, since which time unregenerate man has been sinful, estranged from God, depraved, hopelessly lost except through the redemption which God provided in His Son.

3. That the Bible is the one and only Book through which God revealed to earth the mysteries of heaven; that it is inspired of God, inerrant, absolutely reliable in all its parts.

4. That the Christian Church is God's organization of the present dispensation designed to be the earthly home of God's people.

5. That Jesus Christ is the Head of the Church, God in the flesh, the Author of our salvation, our Savior and Lord, the coming King.

6. That they who have accepted Christ as Savior and Lord have been redeemed from sin and are walking in "newness of life."

7. That they who live a sinning life thereby reveal that they have either never been saved or have fallen away.

8. That all of our Savior's commandments were given to be literally observed by all believers.

9. That Jesus Christ will come again to receive to Himself the saved and to bring judgment upon the lost.

10. That there will be a general resurrection of both just and unjust.

11. That the unrighteous will go "into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal."

CHAPTER I

THE CREATION

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. —Gen. 1:1.

All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made.—Jno. 1:3.

All ideas of the creation cluster around two great centers: the natural and the super-natural.

The first accounts for everything from natural causes, and miracles are recognized as merely wonderful natural occurrences. Applying this line of reasoning to the creation, it does not admit of the creation or formation of anything by the immediate act of a personal God but accounts for the coming into existence of all things or beings through the operation of natural laws or causes. According to this theory the earth, instead of being called into being and form through the Word of an Omnipotent Being, was brought to its present form through the operation of Nature's laws covering a period of perhaps millions of years; man, instead of being created by an immediate act of God, was evolved from the lower forms of life and after countless centuries of development and finally appeared to view as an intelligent being, making and recording history. Evolution, in some form, is the hypothesis upon which the adherents of this mode of reasoning base their conclusions.

Those who believe in the super-natural recognize

God as the Creator of all things, believe in His miracle-working power, and point to such occurrences as the great flood in the days of Noah, the dividing of the waters of the Read Sea and of Jordan, the falling of Jericho, and the raising of Lazarus as evidence that God does at times set aside the ordinary course of Nature for purposes which we may or may not understand. Applying this theory of the miracle-working power of God to the creation, we see all things brought into existence through the Word of His mouth, the world formed out of nothing, Adam created out of the dust of the earth, the touch of God's infinite power and wisdom transforming a rib of man into a woman, all forms of animal and vegetable life called into being through the immediate act of God.

Turning to Genesis, we find the most striking evidences of the super-natural in the creation. Here are a number of things which could not be true if there were nothing supernatural or super-human about the creation:

"In the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth" (1:1).

"And God said, Let there be light, and there was light" (1:3).

"And God created....every living creature that moveth" (1:21).

"And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the earth" (2:7).

"And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh thereof; and the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a

woman, and brought her unto the man" (2:21, 22).

None of these events can be explained from natural causes. We are confronted with one of two conclusions: (1) If this narrative is not reliable, then we must at once discard the doctrine that all of the Bible is God's inspired Word, and absolutely reliable. (2) If it is reliable, then we must reject as untrue everything which conflicts with it. As the authority of the Bible as God's Word will be considered in another chapter we shall not discuss it here.

Men have said much about the harmony which exists between science and the Bible. We readily admit that there can be no conflict between the Bible and science. The Bible is God's Word, and "it is impossible for God to lie." Science is truth. Since both are truth, they can not but be in agreement in every detail. And by this logic we must conclude that whatever comes in the name of science that can not be harmonized with the Bible must be classed as "science, falsely socalled."

The greatest mistake made by naturalists and other scientists is that of arriving at conclusions independent of (and often in spite of) what the Bible has to say concerning things along the line of their researches. They study the archives of ancient nations, and are sure that there were at least partly civilized nations on the earth many thousands of years before the time that the Bible says the first man was created. They search the rocks, collect antiquated fossils, compare notes with others of their kind, and conclude that there was life on the earth millions of years ago. They examine the protoplasm

from which springs the life of humans, animals, and plants, and conclude that all must have had a common origin. They study the ape, the "missing link," their first and second cousins, and establish beyond the possibility of a doubt (in their own minds) that the monkey tribe has the probable distinction of being the immediate predecessor of man. After they have established (?) these (supposed-to-be) facts, they (sometimes) compare their conclusions with what the Bible teaches relative to these matters. Some of them do not hesitate to pronounce the Bible an unreliable book, while others make desperate efforts to prove that the Bible is in harmony with these conclusions which flatly contradict it on a number of points, even quoting Bible to prove that the Bible does not always mean what it says. Result: two kinds of unbelievers—one that rejects the Bible entirely, the other pretending to believe the Bible while at the same time trying to discredit its message.

The mistake made by honest scientists is caused by the fact that they have at best but a partial knowledge upon which to base their calculations. Of no man is it true, as it is of God, that he knows everything. We respect the men who spend their whole lives along special lines, making researches and discoveries in addition to those who in preceding generations had given their lives to the same cause, and we readily admit that they know more in a minute about the things which they made a specialty than we do in a month; but we draw the line on the conclusion that therefore their conclusions are more reliable than the Bible, which is the revealed Word of God. Socrates, Copernicus, Galileo, Newton, Herschel,

Humboldt, Spencer, Darwin, Huxley, Edison, and other great thinkers were marvels along their respective lines, but who is there who pretends that they knew even a small fractional part of what God knows about the things which they spent a whole life time in trying to find out? And who is there who does not admit of the possibility of the most scholarly men, limited as they are in powers of mind and thought and knowledge, making the worst kinds of mistakes in their conclusions?

One illustration will help to impress us with the fallibility of scholarly man. There was a time when scientists had unanswerable argument that the world was flat. "If the world turn over," they argued, "why don't men fall off?" They were perfectly logical in their conclusions. In their day nothing was known of the law of gravitation, and if men had ever sailed around the earth it was so long ago that all men had forgotten it. What was more reasonable, therefore, in the light of the knowledge of their day, than the conclusion that the world was flat. Only an ignoramus or a dreamer could consistently venture to dispute what practically everybody believed to be a fact. But well established as this theory was, it took only a few later discoveries to discredit it. Had they known of men who sailed around the globe, and had they known anything of gravitation, there would not have been a single intelligent man to believe the theory. But they did not know; therefore they seemed perfectly logical in their error. In a similar way have many theories, that one generation believed to be absolutely true, proven to be erroneous by the revelations of the succeeding generation. The scien-

tists were honest enough, and their logic was blameless; but they based their conclusions upon partial knowledge, which accounts for their errors.

In the light of this it is not surprising to find one generation of scientists hold to certain "proven" theories as "facts," only to have another generation of scientists discover them to be anything but facts. The man who said that any work on science over ten years of age is out of date may have overstated a truth, but he hit a very vital spot which critics of the Bible should not fail to remember. Not until men recognize that in God alone is knowledge that is complete and infallible will they cease making investigations independent of the Bible and hold to theories which the Bible positively contradicts.

This brings us to the only logical and safe conclusion that can be reached: Since the Bible is God's Word, and since it is "impossible for God to lie," the Bible should be considered as final and absolute authority in all its teachings, the great arbiter in every time of dispute or doubt.

Applying this rule to the creation, we accept without question the Genesis account of this great work of God. We may not be able to understand all its details, but we are not mistaken in the belief that the creation was wrought at the hands of a personal and miracle-working God who called heaven and earth into existence and set the universe in order as described in the first and second chapters of Genesis. Any one who accepts modifications in and deviations from this inspired account, believing rather the development or evolutionary theory, falls an

easy victim to the enemies of the Bible who profess to have the faculty of giving superior light. Accept the Genesis account of the creation as being literally true, and discard everything that teaches to the contrary.

The magnitude and glory of the creation leads us to magnify and reverence and glorify the Creator. Behold Him at the beginning of time, speaking the word, and all heaven and earth sprang into existence. "Let there be light," rang out throughout the universe, and heaven and earth were lit up with the glorious light of God. At His word the waters were divided from the dry land, the lower forms of life appeared, animals were created, and finally man, as the crowning work of God's creation, came into being. God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, "and man became a living soul." "And God looked upon all that he had made, and, behold, all was very good."

This was in the beginning. Ever since that time has God manifested His majesty, goodness, and power. And His greatness will be still further revealed when at the end of time He will speak the word which will assemble the hosts of God into His everlasting presence and the wicked banished forever from Him and cast into the "everlasting burnings." Blessed be God for His bountiful blessings upon the children of men. We look at His creation, and are 'filled with wonder, love, and praise." We look at the Creator, and we worship Him as Lord and King. We behold the creation, look at the Creator, and exclaim with the psalmist, "Great is the Lord."

Questions

1. What two general views of the creation are held by man?

2. Compare the Genesis account of the creation with the evolutionary view of the same event.

3. Are the revelations of science a help or a hindrance to the understanding of God's Word? a help or a hindrance in establishing, in the minds of men, the Bible as God's Word? Give reasons for your answer?

4. What rule should be observed in the study of doubtful points or problems?

5. Tell, in your own language, the story of the creation.

6. What benefits do you derive from the study of the creation?

CHAPTER II

MAN

God created man in his own image.—Gen. 1:27.
What is man, that thou art mindful of him?—Psa. 8:4.
God made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions.—Eccl. 7:29.

As we follow man through the successive stages of his career, we are made to exclaim with the psalmist, "What is man, that thou art mindful of him?" Created in the image of God, man fell into the lowest depths of degradation and sin. And it is this fallen creature upon whom God bestows the most abundant honors. "God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." To meditate upon all that God has done for His unworthy creatures, helps us to appreciate His goodness and love. To this end let us study man as he appears in Scripture, under four different heads: Creation, Fall, Redemption, Eternal Destiny.

I. The Creation

The inspired record of the creation makes man the climax. God had created the massive whale, the mighty lion, the fleet-footed gazelle, and other animals superior to man along other lines; but as yet He had not created any being that bore His own image. So "God created man in his own image," endued him with an intellect which made him the master of the animal kingdom, and set him in domin-

ion over all the earth. Whatever may be said of man bearing the physical image of God, it is evident that it is the spiritual image to which this refers. In physical form man is not far removed from the lower animals; but in the attributes of mind and soul man bears the image of God. When Paul speaks of "being changed into the same image" he speaks of a change which is in no way related to the physical form, but a change which means a renewal "after the image of him that created him." With this conception of man being in the image of God, let us study him as God created him. The child of God is a finite being shining in the image of the infinite God in the following traits and characteristics:

1. **Intelligence.**—The fact that Adam was able to give names to all the beasts of the field (something which the most learned man of the present time is unable to do) proves him to have been a man of the highest order of intelligence. It is through the intelligence of man, not his physical strength, that he is enabled to exercise dominion over all the earth.

2. **Purity.**—Not until man yielded to temptation and fell into sin was there any impurity about him. Being without sin, he was holy as God is holy.

3. **Happiness.**—In the midst of the beautiful paradise of God, surrounded by all manner of food and all manner of scenes that were beautiful to behold, having perfect peace with God and harmony with all his surroundings, pure and holy, enjoying the presence and fellowship of both Creator and creature, who can doubt the perfect happiness of primitive man?

4. **Immortality.**—Death came into the world be-

cause of sin (Rom. 5:12, 19), making it clear that without the advent of sin there would have been no death. Of the immortality of the soul we shall speak in a later portion of this chapter.

5. **Sociability.**—When God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone," He not only uttered an important truth pertaining to the marriage relation but called attention to a fundamental trait of man's being. At the foundation of sociability is human sympathy. It is the tie that binds and makes us mutually helpful to one another here—a foretaste of the bond of fellowship which will weld us together into one great, unified, glorified body in heaven.

6. **Worship.**—Man is a worshipful being. In right relationship with God, he worships the Creator. Fallen into sin, he worships idols in some form. There never was a human soul that was devoid of worship. Man worships—either the God of heaven, or one or more of the numerous gods of earth. There is a spirit of devotion about man—and when this reverence and devotion is centered in God it makes him pious, pure, holy, heavenly minded.

7. There is one trait in man, Christian man, in which he does not resemble his Maker, and that is his liability to fall. The fact that perfect man is beset with this liability is proven in the case of Adam's fall. So long as we are in the flesh we are human and liable to err. But even in this we have an example in Christ who, though tempted in all points as man is tempted, taught us how to resist temptation and maintain our purity before God. May we learn a lesson from Him in the matter of resisting temptation in the power of the Most High,

knowing that when we reach the world to come we shall be like God in that there it will be no longer possible for us to fall.

II. The Fall

Man in the fall is as low, degraded, wretched, hopeless, and helpless as he was exalted, pure, happy, and glorious before the fall. The scene of the fall is in the garden of Eden. The process of man's fall is similar to every temptation and consequent yielding at the present time. For this reason we have a valuable object lesson in the experience of Mother Eve. Here are the steps in the fall as set forth in Genesis:

1. Eve, happy and contented, pure and sinless, about her daily duties.

2. The tempter, appearing first in the role of an humble questioner and later as an angel of light.

3. Attention called to a restriction laid upon the life of Adam and Eve.

4. A lie, made to appear plausible by misapplied truth.

5. Doubting God's Word, being fascinated by false hope of greater freedom and knowledge.

6. Closing eyes to truth, reaching forth the hand in search of something to better conditions.

7. Sin and death—according to the word of the Lord.

The only difference between this and other sins committed is a difference between circumstances and details. God's truth, Satan's lie, and man's blindness in supposing the devil's lie to be preferable to God's truth, figure in every transgression. "There is a way

that seemeth right unto a man; but the end thereof are the ways of death."

The results of the fall are plainly taught in the Word and plainly seen on every hand. Here are a few of them:

1. "Sin entered into the world, and death by sin" (Rom. 5:12).
2. "Death passed upon all men" (Rom. 5:12).
3. "Mind and conscience....defiled" (Tit. 1:15).
4. "Heart of man deceitful....and desperately wicked" (Jer. 17:9).
5. A great curse (Gen. 3:14, 17, 18).
6. An awful bondage (II Tim. 2:26).
7. "Turned into hell" (Psa. 9:17).
8. "Everlasting punishment" (Matt. 25:46).

Scores of scriptural references could be quoted in support of either of the above results. The Bible is full of evidence teaching the degradation, sinfulness, unworthiness, and pending doom of fallen man. Nor need we confine ourselves to the testimony of Scripture to prove the depravity and utter unworthiness of man. We have only to open our eyes and look upon a sin-stained world, and the Bible story of the utter depravity of fallen man is confirmed. As a further light on this subject, let us compare this present evil world with Gen. 1:31:

1. "And God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good."

2. A world miserably spoiled by sin, where iniquity abounds—lying, hatred, murder, covetousness, lust, poverty, filth, profanity, and sins without number.

The condition of sinful man is thus summed up

in Paul's letter to the Ephesians: "We all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature the children of wrath.....without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, the strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world" (Eph. 2:3, 12).

The unworthiness of man is further shown in a recital of what God has done for man and what man did in return:

1. God created man in His own image—pure, holy, happy, provided with unlimited means for bodily and spiritual sustenance. Man believed Satan rather than God, shamefully forfeited the grace of God, and fell into sin and death.

2. As God faithfully conveyed to man a knowledge of what he had done, He coupled this with the promise of a Redeemer. The first child born to man was a murderer.

3. When man had hopelessly sunken into the lowest depths of sin, God graciously gave him another chance through Noah. Soon after his release from the ark Noah fell into the sin of drunkenness, and his posterity needed only to become strong enough in numbers till they became so wicked and defiant that God had to scatter them to the four winds of the earth in a confusion of tongues.

4. In Abraham God gave man another chance; but the history of Israel shows how little this manifestation of the grace of God was appreciated.

5. When God searched among men to find any one who was righteous and who followed after Him

He had no other alternative but to confess that "there is none righteous, no, not one....for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."

6. "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

III. Redemption

The question naturally arises, What did God see in a creature so utterly unworthy as man, that He did and is still continuing to do so much for him? We sometimes sing—

"Amazing grace, how sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me."

Yes, it is amazing; but God's all-seeing eye beheld something in man that man himself overlooks. The utter depravity of fallen man does not change the fact that this fallen creature once bore the image of God, and that the grace of God is powerful enough to restore him to the same image. Fallen man, though totally depraved, possesses qualities which make him the peer of all the lower animals and which by the grace of God may still be used to His glory provided he responds to God's love and accepts the operation of the miracle of God's grace in the soul. And God alone, in whose infinite mind the plan of creation was conceived, was also capable of conceiving a perfect plan of salvation. Thank God that there is a way whereby this most degraded of all creatures may again be redeemed and restored to favor and fellowship of God, shining in His image.

In this connection it is well to notice the great contrast between the plan of God and the numerous

plans conceived in the human mind. Good works, moral worth or character, intellect, wealth, and scores of other human inventions have been put forward as claims to merit the favor of God. But God looks to something more enduring. Isaiah says, "All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags." Paul says of human sacrifices that they "can never make the comers thereunto perfect." Christ compared the self-righteous Pharisee (with a long string of virtues to his credit) with the poor publican (whose only petition was that the Lord might be merciful to him a sinner) and said that the publican's standing was the better of the two. There is absolutely no merit about man apart from God—no enduring value about his wealth, no saving virtue about his morals, no enduring fame in his achievements, nothing that can in any way enhance his chances before God. Since "all have sinned," the edict, "The soul that sinneth it shall die," is written against all men. "Without hope and without God in the world," sinful man is doomed to face eternity in a lost, helpless, hopeless condition, for "the wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God."

Is there no hope? Yes; God has provided a means of escape—"Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him shall not perish, but have everlasting life." "If we walk in the light as he is in the light, we shall have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." "By one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." In Jesus Christ

there is hope for every believer, for every "sinner, saved by grace."

"Marvelous grace!" exclaims the poet. Yes, God's grace is indeed marvelous. He saw in sinful, fallen man the possibility of children of God and made it possible for every man, woman, and child in every clime and age to have access to this grace and accept restoration to and adoption into His happy family. Not one need be lost, for God's plan of salvation, like everything conceived in His infinite mind, is perfect. The unnumbered millions of lost souls in eternity will be consigned to the place prepared for the devil and his angels, not because the plan of God was imperfect but because sinful man failed to improve his opportunity to accept God's terms of redemption. God's invitation is to "all ye ends of the earth"—are we co-operating with God in making the invitation known? It is "not his will that any should perish"—do we share in this burden for the salvation of the lost? The blood of Jesus Christ is sufficient to cleanse the souls of all who come to Him in faith. Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God, "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world," is complete and sufficient to effect the redemption of every soul in every clime and age. Praise God for His wonderful, marvelous grace.

IV. Eternal Destiny

Well has the poet said,

"Dust thou art, to dust returneth,
Was not spoken of the soul."

The disposition of body and soul at death is thus set forth by Solomon: "Then shall the dust return

to the earth as it was; and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it" (Eccl. 12:7).

The Bible is a meaningless book to those who reject the doctrine of the immortality of the soul. What was Christ talking about anyway, when He told of the state of Lazarus and Dives after death, if the soul ceases to exist with the death of the body? How can the righteous go into "life eternal," and the unrighteous into "everlasting punishment," if there are no souls to reward or to punish in eternity? All that the Bible has to say with reference to the soul of man is based upon the doctrine of its eternal existence.

There are very few who reject the doctrine of eternal existence for the righteous, but the idea that the unrighteous also will exist in eternity and suffer the vengeance of eternal fire is repulsive to many. They talk freely about the prophecy of Malachi (4:1) who says that in that great day the wicked shall be as stubble and be burnt up, but all such texts as "where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched," "everlasting burnings," "smoke of their torment ascendeth forever and ever," "unquenchable fire," "everlasting punishment," etc., are, in their opinion, either figurative, or mis-translations, or to be rejected wholesale. Even their favorite text in Malachi, if it proves anything with reference to the immortality of the souls of the wicked, proves eternal destruction without annihilation. Now take the illustration of the burning of stubble. They are completely and forever destroyed, yet not annihilated, for all the material substance remains—what was formerly stubble is now ashes and vapor and smoke.

So the souls of the wicked, though "punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord," are not annihilated but suffer forever the "vengeance of eternal fire," in "the place prepared for the devil and his angels." The idea of "no conscious existence" on the part of the wicked in eternity falls to the ground when we remember the many scriptures that tell of the sufferings of the doomed in eternity. Yes, the soul of the unrighteous, as well as of the righteous, is immortal. The eternal, conscious existence of the soul, saved or unsaved, is a "great and dreadful" reality.

God has made abundant provisions for His people, both here and hereafter. For His people He has prepared an everlasting Kingdom, where in the fullness of joy and glory they will be with Him forever. He has also prepared a place "for the devil and his angels" (Matt. 25:41). Further than this, He has made no preparation. There is nothing surer than the fact that since the unrighteous made themselves unfit for habitation in the glory world there is no other place for them to spend eternity than in the place not prepared for man. There is no other course left open for the great Judge on the judgment day than to utter the fearful sentence, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, **prepared for the devil and his angels.**" And the blame rests wholly upon the doomed souls themselves, for God made abundant provisions for their salvation.

Let us notice briefly the great doctrine of separation. We have it in this life—a separation of Church from world. The Church of God on earth is described as "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood,

an holy nation, a peculiar people." In the intermediate state the separation is marked by "a great gulf" (Luke 16:26). In the resurrection the separation is again characterized in the terms, "Resurrection of life,...resurrection of damnation" (Jno. 5:29). Again at the judgment bar the righteous are placed on the right and the unrighteous on the left (Matt. 25:33). Finally, in eternity the righteous will be "forever with the Lord" in the realms of glory, while the unrighteous will be forever in the lake of fire, where "the smoke of their torment ascendeth forever and ever."

The impressive thought of it all is that man, in time, determines for himself on which side of the separation he will be in eternity. The invitation, "Choose ye this day whom ye will serve," involves not only a choice of service but also a choice of destiny. They who in truth accept the invitation, "Come out from among them and be ye separate," and continue faithful to the end, will be on the right side of the separation all along the line. Thus it is clear that while God determines the conditions, man decides his own destiny.

Questions

1. Compare man with the lower animals; with "the man Jesus Christ."

2. What is it to be in the image of God?

3. Compare man as he was, before the fall, in the fall, and after the restoration.

4. If redemption is complete for every creature, why are not all men eternally saved?

5. What proofs have you that the soul of man is immortal?

6. How would you convince the man of his error who believes that the righteous will live forever in glory but that the unrighteous will be annihilated?

7. Why is man personally responsible for his eternal destiny?

8. Quote scripture to prove (1) that Christ is our only hope of redemption; (2) that the heathen is lost without the Gospel; (3) that therefore we are responsible for bringing the Gospel to all men.

9. Give scriptural reasons why we owe our life and service to God.

CHAPTER III

THE BIBLE

In the volume of the BOOK it is written.—Heb. 10:7. Forever, O Lord, thy WORD is settled in heaven.—Psa. 119:89.

The subject which stands at the head of this chapter is synonymous with the title that stands at the head of Part I of this book. When you speak of the MESSAGE you speak of the BIBLE.

The word Bible means "the Book." It is quite an appropriate name for this divinely inspired revelation from God to man, for it is the only message of its kind. It is the mission of the Church to make this message known to all men, in every clime and age.

That this book may have its proper place in life, esteem, and affections of men it is important that we keep in mind a number of fundamental and incontrovertible facts. A proper appreciation of any book requires a proper conception of what it is, what it contains, and what is its proper place. These will appear as we meditate upon the following:

1. **The Bible is a direct revelation from God to man.**

Let us suppose the whole world shut out entirely from communication with any Being or source of intelligence outside the sphere of man. We are permitted to talk with one another, to study nature, to gaze at the stars, to exchange ideas as to cause and

effect, to enlarge upon the theories of others concerning existence before the advent of man or after death. Limited to the intelligence of earth, both Christian and pagan would be on exactly the same basis, as neither could get any information from any Intelligence beyond. Such great problems as the origin of matter, the origin of life, the origin of man, the existence and destiny of the soul, etc., would of necessity remain subjects of pure speculation and forever remain unsolvable mysteries. The pagan philosopher, the agnostic, and every other inquirer after truth who rejects the idea of direct revelation from God to man would be as apt to make as correct guesses as to the answer to these questions as would the faithful child of God, for all would be dependent upon human discovery and reason for their conclusions. In the language of a noted agnostic, when we come to a question like "If a man die, shall he live again?" we could say, "Hope says, Yes; reason says, Perhaps"—but there we would be compelled to stop, for human reason can go no farther.

But we hear a whisper. Some one says, "In the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth." Where did he get his information? Some one else told him. Where did the other man get it? He read it in the Bible? Who wrote that part of the Bible? Moses. Where did Moses get his information? He got it from God. Again we hear some one say, "Behold, I show you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible." Where did he get that information? He got it from the Bible. Who wrote

that part of the Bible? Paul. Where did Paul get his information. He got it from God.

May not Moses and Paul and other Bible writers simply have written what they heard other men say? Let us suppose, for the sake of argument, that they did. Now let us trace these reports to their origin. They either had their start in a revelation from God to man, or they are mere speculation and the Bible is a pagan book. The origin of all things material or spiritual, the immortality of the soul, the eternal destiny of man, and scores of other problems revealed to man in this revelation from God which we call "the Bible," would all be shrouded in the densest mystery were it not for the fact that God saw fit to reveal these things to man.

There are many things in the Bible that can be explained only on the ground that they are revelations from a super-human Intelligence. The prophets, hundreds of years before Christ was born, gave an accurate and detailed description of His life from the first to the last. The vision of Nebuchadnezzar, interpreted by Daniel, and later another vision of Daniel himself, gave a correct history of nations for centuries afterwards. The Bible itself, recognized the world over as the most wonderful book ever written is the production of an obscure nation that never excelled in letters or in scholarship and would long ago have been forgotten had it not been for the fact that there was a God in Israel. The writings of scientists of all schools have all been compelled to reverse themselves in the light of later revelations, but the Bible has never been compelled to reverse itself on a single point. The Bible has proven itself

to be a complete, perfect, harmonious, truthful story from beginning to end, though it was written at various times covering a lapse of about sixteen centuries, by about forty different authors of all ranks from peasant to king and from "the ignorant and unlearned" to the profoundest scholars. These things can be accounted for only on the ground that an all-wise and infinite Mind saw fit to reveal to imperfect man what would otherwise forever remain unfathomable mysteries. Take away the idea of direct revelation, and you destroy the foundation upon which the Bible stands.

2. It is given by inspiration of God.

The two most direct scriptures teaching this fact are II Tim. 3:16 ("All scripture is given by inspiration of God") and II Pet. 1:18 ("Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost"). The fact and necessity and reasonableness of divine inspiration of the Holy Scriptures are made clear by "many infallible proofs" both inside and outside the Bible.

By inspiration we mean that the men who wrote the Bible were God-inbreathed; that they wrote as they were moved by the Holy Ghost; that though they used the language of men and left the impress of their personality upon their writings they also wrote in the language of God, both the men and the message being inspired of Him, bringing to the world a perfect message according to His will. The position of men of faith concerning inspiration, as distinguished from the attitude of those who would put a more liberal construction on the inspiration and authority of the holy scriptures, is best described by

the term, "plenary and verbal inspiration of the Word." Briefly stated, the whole Bible in all its parts, is inspired of God, and this inspiration extends to the very words in which the message was given from God, through men, to the world.

Along with the fact that "all scripture is given by inspiration of God" is the other fact that it is all "profitable." Even the things which the devil said and which God directed His servants to embody in the Book, are profitable in that they throw light upon the devil's methods of work and deception, thus throwing the child of God upon his guard. "All scripture," no matter who first uttered the words, or whatsoever the character of the speaker or in whatsoever part of the Book the words are recorded, are alike given to the world through the inspiration of the Almighty, and should be received as such. God in His wisdom saw what man needed, and in what form and through what instrumentality the Scripture should be given so as to make the most marked impression. In the sacred canon there is nothing left out that is needed for man's edification and well being. Not one jot or tittle of this sacred Volume is to be omitted or changed, and the Bible pronounces the severest penalties upon those who would add to or take away from it. Read Gal. 1:8, 9 and Rev. 22: 18, 19.

Some people stumble at the doctrine of verbal inspiration because they can see the personality of the writer revealed in the several books of the Bible. In response to this it should be borne in mind that God does not take away the personality of the man when He uses him in His service. The boldness of

Peter, the childlike simplicity of John, the cautious disposition of Thomas, the judicial mind of James, the fervor of Paul, the eloquence of Apollos, and the personal traits of other apostles were not marred in the least because they were laid upon the altar and used of the Lord in a good cause. In fact, this very individualism is a help in bringing the Gospel of God to man in the form which appeals with greatest power to all classes of people. Some are attracted by the scholarly masterpieces of Paul; others, by the common sense utterances of James; others, by the simple but impressive teachings of John; others, by the imagery found in the writings of the prophets. In using these different personalities and weaving them into the perfect message God showed His wisdom in making His appeal in most effective form. The Bible is none the less the Word of God because God chose to clothe the message from heaven to earth in the language of men.

The painter takes his brush and paint. Many colors appear on the building, they having lost none of their personality by being spread on the surface; but it is nevertheless the work of the painter from start to finish. In like manner did God use men as the instruments through which His Word was given to the world. In this great painting (the Bible) we see the personality of men, but the whole is the work of God, every word breathed in infinite power and wisdom.

3. **It is the Word of God.**

This is made plain in any Biblical discussion on inspiration. Such testimonies as "Thus saith the Lord," "God said," "The Lord said," "I have re-

ceived of the Lord," "The things which I write unto you are the commandments of God," etc., etc., etc., are quite numerous in the writings of apostles and prophets. They confirm what has already been said. The Bible "is given by inspiration of God;" it is the WORD OF GOD.

4. **It is absolutely reliable.**

The fact of inspiration emphasizes the reliability of the Bible. The men whom God used in writing the Bible were all imperfect men, but their imperfections are nowhere incorporated as a part of the message. We see evidences of their imperfections as we study their lives; but when, "as the oracles of God," they wrote what God gave them to write they wrote a message that is perfect even as God is perfect. To illustrate: A poor man, acting as the agent of a rich corporation, though unable to pay very much on his own account, may sign his name to a document calling for the payment of millions and it will be honored as much as if he was the owner of millions himself. So the inspired man of God, unworthy in himself but being authorized by the Almighty to write a portion of the sacred canon, was able to write a message as pure and as powerful as God Himself. It was the wisdom of the Infinite, speaking through imperfect man as a medium, revealing Himself in a perfect message. Behold the prophets, faithfully proclaiming what God had committed to them, earnestly inquiring of God what the message meant.

This Book being from God, it is trustworthy and correct in every particular. From it Paul was able to argue, in telling what God meant by Abraham's

seed (Gal. 3:16), that since God said "seed," not "seeds," he therefore meant the Messiah and not multitudes of people. This book is correct, even to the letter. In the case just cited the addition of a single letter would have changed the character of a very important prophecy. When we open any other book, no matter how highly we esteem the writer and how well equipped we judge him to be to write authoritatively concerning his subject, we expect to see some imperfections in his writings, for it is the authorship of imperfect man; but when we open the Bible we do so with full confidence and knowledge that there are no imperfections there, for the perfect God is its Author. In all cases where some other book conflicts with any part of the Bible, we decide at once, without hesitation, that the Bible is right and the other book is wrong. "Forever, O God, thy word is settled in heaven"—forever let it also be settled on earth.

5. **It is the believer's hand-book of facts.**

If you have never thought of that before, begin at once to investigate and be convinced. Biblical facts are not only numerous, but they are also very valuable in that they shed light on the Christian's pathway to glory, no matter what his pursuit or vocation in life may be. It tells about the origin of all things visible and invisible. It tells about the creation, fall, short-comings, iniquity, deliverance, duties, opportunities, and destiny of man. It tells about the Trinity, about heaven, about the lake of fire, about angels and demons, about saints here and hereafter. It tells us how we ought to behave ourselves in the house of the Lord, in the home, in

social circles, in business life, wherever we go. It is the light that opens our eyes to the many snares and dangers with which this world abounds, and to the blessings and opportunities abounding in the pathway to glory upon which God would have us all to travel. It tells about the ordinances of the Lord's house, about the restrictions which God throws around His people for their safety and well being, about every provision which God made for the highest welfare of His people. It reveals to us the secrets of a happy life. It is a perfect guide in morals, an exact book on Christian ethics, a safe business guide, a most excellent book of instructions on the Christian home; and, in fact, tells about every phase of life, here and hereafter, that it is important for man to know. It is a treasury of knowledge which no one can afford to be without.

6. **It should be our daily companion.**

A book so valuable should not be neglected. We should make a faithful effort to get these facts into our minds and hearts, and to keep this book of facts within easy reach at all times for enlightenment and refreshment. The Bereans were accounted "noble" because they "searched the scriptures daily." Not a day should be permitted to pass but that this heavenly companion has contributed something to our lives.

7. **It should be in every home, in every institution, in every heart.**

A home without a Bible in it is a dismal place. No home should be left without a Bible, if it lies within our power to have one put there. There is no book which drives more speedily the darkness

out of God-less homes than does the Bible. Let it have first place in our libraries and on our center tables, and let us use our influence in creating a similar place for it in other homes. A "family Bible," in which are a number of interesting records which draw the attention of people to the Book, should be in every home.

Then there should be a faithful effort made to get a place for the Bible in every institution, public or private. The Gideons are doing a good thing by getting the Bible into hotels. Others are doing a noble work in getting this good old Book into jails, penitentiaries, and other penal and reformatory institutions. Encourage this—and don't neglect any opportunities to keep yourselves in readiness to inquire, as did Philip, "Understandest thou what thou readest?" In other words, get the Bible into all the places you can, and follow it up to reinforce its influence by your life and testimony.

While it is important that the Bible be placed into every home and every institution, if it gets no farther it is still a closed book. It must be gotten into the mind and heart before it is of any practical value. The Bible is as so much paper if it is not read. It is at best but of literary and moral value if it gets no farther than the head. But when it reaches the heart we can say, "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul." Resting there, we can testify, "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee." Let us work and pray, to the end that this great message which is "the power of God unto salvation unto every one that believeth" may find a resting place in every heart.

Questions

1. Why do you look upon the Bible as a revelation from God? In what sense is it a revelation?

2. Define verbal and plenary inspiration. What importance do you attach to it?

3. Compare the Bible with other good books.

4. What if your Bible were not absolutely reliable in all its parts?

5. What help has the Bible been to you in your Christian life?

6. What value do you place upon an unreserved obedience to the Word of God? to a daily reading of this message?

7. Discuss the value of the Bible as a book of facts.

8. What is our duty in the way of making this Bible known to all people?

CHAPTER IV

THE BIBLE

(Continued)

The entrance of thy words giveth light.—Psa. 119:130. Whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him.—I Jno. 2:5.

Why should we prize our Bible? Why should we make it our constant, daily companion? Why should we give it a prominent place in our lives and in our homes? Why should we so completely absorb its message that we may talk in the language of Scripture? Why should we lend our lives to the great work of making this message known to all the world?

The answer is found in its exceeding preciousness, in its transforming power over the lives of men, in its lofty ideals and uplifting influence, in the fact that it brings the light of heaven to every heart and every region where it finds an entrance. We learn to appreciate it only as we come in contact with its quickening power, as we experience the joy which this message brings to the human soul, as we recognize the great treasure found in this book of God.

In this brief chapter we want to bring to your minds a few high lights of Scripture showing what a treasure we have in this inspired message from heaven. We will let the Word speak for itself:

1. **The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever: the judgments of the Lords are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. Moreover by them is thy servant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward.**—Psa. 19:7-11.

Comment is unnecessary. Out of the depths of his experience did the psalmist give voice to what there is in this blessed Word for the needy soul.

2. **O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day.**—Psa. 119:97.

The thought brought to us in this tribute is the joy which a prayerful reading of Scripture brings. The law has terrors for the lawless, but it is a message of interest and profit and joy for the righteous. They whose souls are fed upon this treasury of heavenly wealth have experiences similar to those to which the psalmist gives expression.

3. **The entrance of thy words giveth light: it giveth understanding to the simple.**—Psa. 119:130.

This is true, whether you apply it to the human heart or to communities. Light springs up wherever the Gospel goes. There is a vast difference in life and power between the child of God who has formed the habit of daily Bible reading and meditation and the one who is not so diligent in the study of the Word even though he may be loyal in service. **Other things being equal, the more Bible we have**

in our heads and hearts the more of heavenly light and power and wisdom there is about our life and service. As for communities, it is always noticeable when the Bible takes hold there. It is the light from heaven shining in the dark places of earth. Compare the nations called Christian with those called pagan or heathen. We admit that in the most Christianized nations there is but a scant supply of real Christianity, but even with the little that there is there is a vast difference between the enlightenment of such nations and those that are entirely ignorant of God's Word. There is a civilizing, refining, purifying, enlightening, uplifting influence in the Bible that is not found in any other book.

4. **Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, a light unto my path.**—Psa. 119:105.

The first thought to be noticed in this connection is that the Word is not the path itself, but that it simply throws light upon this path. Christ says, "I am the way." The Bible simply sheds light on this way. It tells us how to live. It tells us about the way of salvation, the way to glory, and how to get there. As a lantern guides the feet of the traveler in safe paths through the dark, so the Bible, as the great heavenly lantern, shows the way of "strangers and pilgrims on the earth" traveling through the darkness of this world to the pearly gates of the new Jerusalem.

5. **Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word.** —Psa. 119:9.

This text is just as applicable to young women, or to men and women of all ages. It is a rule of life

showing the one and only way in which we may be cleansed from faults or sins—"according to thy WORD." Many have failed because they have sought cleansing in some other way. The Bible contains the only recipe for real cleansing. Go to the Bible to find the way.

6. **Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.**—Psa. 119:11.

Is it your desire to live a life free from sin? Or are you ever approached by people who are seeking advice as to how they may live the overcoming life? It is well to hear what others may have to say about this important question. It is helpful to read the books of godly men and ponder over their advice concerning a sinless life. But the secret is found in hiding God's Word in our hearts. Where the Word of God is entrenched in the heart there is a power to overcome that is not found in lives of men who are ignorant of God's Word. And let us not forget that our text says "heart," not head.

7. **The word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.**—Heb. 4:12.

The chief thought in this text is the power of the Word. It cuts where nothing else can reach. It separates, where nothing else can avail. It lays bare the thoughts and motives of men. It is the quickening power, "the sword of the Spirit," the instrument of God that accomplishes great things in the salvation of souls and holding them right before God. May we say with the psalmist, "I will not forget thy word."

8. **I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.**—Rom. 1:16.

When Paul wrote to the Corinthian brethren, "In Christ Jesus have I begotten you through the Gospel," he called attention to the same truth that he expressed in the words of our text. The Gospel is a living power, bringing to the hearts of the children of men the wonderful Word of the Lord. No wonder that he admonished his son in the faith Timothy to "PREACH THE WORD." No wonder that the importance of the WORD is magnified in many scripture texts and testimonies. When therefore we think of the Book which we love , let us not forget that it bears the message which is declared to be "**the power of God** unto SALVATION to **every one that believeth.**"

Thus we might go on indefinitely, quoting reference after reference, showing the wonders and power of the Word. Few people, even Christian professors, realize what a treasure we have in the Bible, all because they have never given the matter the consideration which its importance deserves. The more we think along this line, the more we get into the depths of this marvelous message from God, the more we become absorbed in it. How important it is, then, that we make this message known and bring others under its transforming power.

It is important, also, that we give the Bible a most important place in our life and services. What the world needs is the **Word.** What preachers need to preach is the **Word.** What our missionaries need

to teach and to practice is the **Word.** It is the life-giving message which all men need. Eloquence is a power that appeals to the ear and graceful poise and gestures are appealing to the eye. Both have their place, but both are vanity without the Word. Make your message rich with the Word of God if you would be the instrument in the hands of God to bring this quickening power to a sickly and sin-stricken world. The great weakness of present day preaching is that there is so much world and so little Bible in it. Don't forget to magnify the **Word.** It is the only message worth while to bring before a dying world.

Questions

1. With what does the Bible compare the Word?

2. Why should the Bible be carried to the dark places of earth?

3. How may people cultivate a taste for Bible reading?

4. Give your methods of getting others interested in Bible study?

5. Give the place which the Word of God occupies in the work of bringing souls to Christ.

6. What can you as an individual do to make this message known to the world?

(For a more complete exposition on the Bible, read J. B. Smith's article on this subject, found in "Bible Doctrine," pp. 88-128, published by Mennonite Publishing House, Scottdale, Pa.)

CHAPTER V

THE CHURCH

Upon this ROCK will I build my CHURCH; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.—Matt. 16:18. Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it ....that he might present it unto himself a glorious church....holy and without blemish.—Eph. 5:25-27.

The Greek word, "ecclesia," from which the word Church is derived, means an assembly called out by authority. It is a most appropriate name for the assembly of God's people, who by authority of God have been called "out of darkness into his marvelous light."

Much has been said concerning the origin of the Church. Some put the date back to the time of Adam; others, to the time of the Israelites, bearing in mind Stephen's reference to "the church in the wilderness" (Acts 7:38); others, to the preaching of John the Baptist; others, to the beginning of the collection of disciples by Christ; and still others, to Pentecost. The difference is largely due to the difference in viewpoints. We are more concerned about what should be the condition of the Christian Church, and what God would have His children do and be, than we are about a technical discussion as to where it dates from. In the bright hereafter, when the saints of God will be collected together in the mighty congregation in heaven, the assemblage will consist of saints of all ages from the time of Adam to the time when the righteous living will be

caught up with the righteous dead to meet the Lord in the air.

Here are a number of facts concerning the Christian Church which every believer should know:

1. **It is composed of the saved children of God.**

Looking at it as a spiritual body, it is the sum total of all saved people, a body of which Christ is the Head. Col. 1:18. The people of God on earth are referred to as "saints," "an holy nation," "strangers and pilgrims," "a royal priesthood," "a chosen generation," etc. Only those to whom such a description is appropriate are proper subjects for membership in the Christian Church.

The Church is not a mere social club, in which all people, regardless of faith or character, unite for social betterment or entertainment. It is not a commercial club, to enhance the business interests of its members. It is not a community of formalists, whose sole and solemn duty is to go through the motion of keeping the commandments. It is the body of believers in Christ, redeemed from sin, obedient to God, living the fellowship of God and of saints, faithful in the service whereunto God has called them. Every faithful servant of God is praying and working to the end that every member of the visible Church may rise to this standard.

2. **The Gospel requirements for admission into the Church are faith, repentance, and obedience.**

When the eunuch wanted to know, "What doth hinder me to be baptized?" the answer was, "If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest."

When on the day of Pentecost the men inquired, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" the answer was, "Repent and be baptized."

Later on, we are told, "They that gladly received the word were baptized." In that day baptism was administered to obedient ones only.

The Church today, like the apostolic Church, should look for "fruits meet for repentance" and wait for evidences that these three conditions have been met before receiving applicants into the Church.

3. **The Church should be kept as free as possible from unconverted members.**

It sometimes happens today, as was the case in the apostolic Church, that a Simon the sorcerer gets into the visible Church. Others may come because of the loaves and fishes in prospect. Overseers in the Church are but human, and with the best of efforts (to say nothing of overseers not so vigilant and faithful) unconverted members are received into the visible Church. Others who are faithful when they come, afterwards fall by the way and become backsliders. When it becomes apparent that unconverted or sickly members are on the church rolls, efforts should be made at once to get them converted. Should this fail, the dead timber should be cut out of the Church. "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump." "Purge out the old leaven," is Paul's instruction to a poorly disciplined church. The number of unconverted members in a church may be reduced to a minimum by the following means:

a. A consistent life on the part of converted members.

b. A vigilant oversight and faithful teaching on the part of the ministry.

c. Wholesome discipline—keeping house according to God's Word.

d. Personal work on the part of the entire working body.

e. Much fervent prayer.

f. An opportunity provided for work for every member.

g. Excommunication, when all other means for restoration and reconciliation fail.

Faithful shepherding, faithful training, faithful teaching—these are essential in the great work of keeping the Church upon Gospel ground.

4. **One mission of the Church is to "preach the Gospel to every creature."**

This great truth is taught in Matt. 28:18-20, Mark 16:15, Luke 24:47, Acts 1:8, and kindred scriptures. "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world....and then shall the end come." When every preacher feels that "woe is me, if I preach not the gospel" and every member's record is such that it can be truthfully said that "all they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word," the Church is on a fair way of fulfilling her mission. A truly missionary church is one in which every member feels burdened to make Christ known to the greatest possible number of people and to win the greatest possible number of souls for God. With this burden resting upon us we are not apt to cease working and praying when we feel physically tired.

5. **Another mission of the Church is to hold and to build up in Christ what she has won for Christ.**

It is one thing to win souls for Christ; it is another thing to hold them and to build them up in Christ. It has well been said that the crown will be won "not in the beginning nor in the middle, but at the end of the race." The work of the Church in building for the Master is thus beautifully and forcefully expressed by Paul in Eph. 4:11-16: "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love."

6. **God has made abundant provisions for the organization of His Church.**

"Order is heaven's first law." "Let all things be done decently and in order" is a characteristic rule of the Church of Christ. He began by collecting a few disciples, ordained them as His apostles, taught them faithfully, commanded them that after His decease they should tarry at Jerusalem until

they were endued with power from on high, after which they were to carry the glad tidings of salvation into all the world. The apostles faithfully carried out His instructions, being careful to fill the vacancy caused by the apostasy of Judas before the advent of the Holy Spirit, and after the work had grown to an extent that they could no longer care for it they led their people in the ordination of Spirit-filled helpers. Afterwards we read of the Christian Church: "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers: for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ....." (Eph. 4:11-16). Who gave? God. For what purpose? for the welfare of the Church. Whom did God use in setting these men apart to their respective places? The Church, the individual members. Through what means? Through voice, through the lot. Who made these men rulers over their flocks? The Holy Ghost. It was the work of the Lord, working through His people who were "laborers together with God," for the furtherance of the cause of Christ and the Church. The apostolic Church faithfully exercised its power to extend its own organizations as the cause required—did it by direction of the Lord. Bishops or elders, evangelists, pastors, teachers, congregations, conferences, etc., are all found in the apostolic Church. The wisdom of God in providing for the organization of His Church is proven, in a negative way, by the fact that churches that stand against organization are usually unstable and short-lived.

7. **Faithful Christian life means fellowship with those of like precious faith.**

"If we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another" (I Jno. 1:7). Notice, John does not say, "We may have," but "We have." It is a sure thing that when a soul has been rescued from sin that that soul will also unite in fellowship with those who have been likewise rescued. But what about the Christian (?) who claims to have had full pardon for his sins and who makes no effort to unite with the people of God? He does not "walk in the light," or he would have fellowship with his fellow believers. But suppose he claims to have fellowship with them, only he makes no effort to unite with their organization. Then let him face this: "He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him" (I Jno. 2:4). The Bible is very hard on "come-outism." Suppose there is no organization of his faith near him. Let him seek the fellowship of those of like precious faith with him, and work and pray to that end. If he does his part, God will see to it that he will get in touch with those with whom he can fellowship according to the faith.

8. **Church membership implies church loyalty.**

To belong to Christ means to be true to His Gospel. To belong to a church means to be true to its doctrines and regulations. If we can not conscientiously do so, we should first spend much time with God and our Bibles, and if we are still out of tune with our church—and are sure, from the light of the Gospel, that it is our church and not ourselves that is off the Gospel foundation—we should at once

seek church associations where we can be in complete loyalty to both Christ and our church. The cause of Christ is suffering woefully because there are too many church members whose disloyalty in the form of indifference or disobedience makes them a positive hindrance to the Cause. The standard for your church is this: It comes nearer to the standard of the Gospel, in doctrine and in life, than any you know of. You should belong to no other. This point settled, we owe it as a duty to God and the Church, to ourselves and to the rising generation, to support loyally the work of the Church, to be obedient to her rules and regulations, to help promote her doctrines, to be instant in prayer and service, to put ourselves upon the altar of God and the Church to be used as God and the Church may direct. Let us remember that the voice of a Spirit-directed church is also the voice of God.

9. **God has invested the Church with great authority and power.**

"Upon this rock," says Christ, "I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Again He says, "Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven." Again, "whosesoever sins ye remit, they shall be remitted unto them." Of the obstinate offender it is said, "If he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican."

What shall we say to these things? Is the Church vested with arbitrary powers; that whether right or wrong it is empowered to lord it over God's heritage and make its members come to time. Nothing of the kind is intended or even hinted at. But

being the body of Christ, officered by overseers who have been set apart to their work by the Holy Ghost, having as its discipline the Gospel of Christ, it is God's organization and vested with the power of heaven—it is the custodian of God's cause upon earth. There is a fearful responsibility resting upon the Church as a body, upon members in particular, especially upon those placed into a position of leadership. The power of the Church is not greater than its responsibility in maintaining Gospel order and holding fast the whole-Gospel faith of Jesus Christ.

The power of the Church is also manifested in its helpful influence over its members—in helping them rise continually in the realms of spiritual life, in bringing the forces of God into unison and thereby multiplying their power for good. As our course of life is run, one by one we lay our armor down and the sad funeral rites of earth are but the signals of a bright triumph in glory. The Church is the recruiting station of earth to gather souls for the ransomed hosts in glory.

Questions

1. Distinguish between the visible and invisible Church; between the Church militant and the Church triumphant.

2. Discuss the position of Christ, of the Holy Ghost, of the Father, of saints and angels in the Church of Christ.

3. Discuss the value of wholesome discipline in the Church.

4. Give what you consider the most important reasons for Church organization.

5. Is it possible to have fellowship with God

and not with the saints? Give reasons for your answer.

6. Describe what you consider an ideal church.

7. Give your ideas as to what should be the relationship between ministry and laity.

8. How does church membership help you spiritually?

9. If you met a man who claimed to be a Christian and at the same time deliberately stood out against holding membership in any church, how would you convince him of his error?

10. Discuss the matter of church extension in heathen lands.

CHAPTER VI

GOD'S PLAN OF SALVATION

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.—Jno. 3:16.

This was noticed briefly in section three of chapter II. We shall now consider it in greater detail. God's plan of salvation takes notice of the following facts:

1. Man created in the image of his Maker—intelligent, pure, free from sin and death.

2. The possibility of man falling, as indicated in the warning, "In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die."

3. Man's transgression and fall.

4. Man spiritually dead, and subject to physical death.

5. Man's utter depravity, and inability to rise.

6. Man's restoration through Christ the Redeemer.

7. Man a saved creature, a member of God's happy family, a member of the Church of Christ, an heir of glory.

The plan is wholly God's. It is the only plan of the kind, as all human plans center around human merit or achievement, rather than the grace of God, as the foundation. We therefore call it "God's plan of salvation," for God alone planned and executed it. Let us notice a few facts concerning it:

1. **It was conceived in the mind of God before man had existence.**

In that day when all nations will be gathered together before the great Judge, He will say to those on the right, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (Matt. 25:34). That means that in the beginning, before man was even created, to say nothing of his transgression and consequent fall, God looked down through the annals of time, saw what man would do, and beforehand made full provisions for man's redemption and restoration. It is proof at once of the foreknowledge, wisdom, power, and love of God.

2. **All men have need of it.**

"There is none righteous, no, not one." "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." "Death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." We quote these as sample references testifying to the universality of the fall and sinfulness of man. Having noticed in another chapter the impossibility of man, of his own accord, getting back to God, we shall not attempt a discussion on that point here.

3. **It is perfect.**

Even if there were some other way of getting back to God (the Bible says there is not) God's plan would still be superior to it, in that it provides for full and free salvation, for perfect redemption, of every human soul in every clime and age. The heavenly light "lighteth every man that cometh into the world." Of little children it is said, "Of such is the kingdom of heaven." To those of responsible

age the promise of salvation is to "whosoever believeth." There is not a single barrier in the way of any honest seeker after salvation that can not be surmounted. There is no language test, no intelligence test, no labor test, no test of any kind that stands in the way of any one seeking after God. The plan of salvation, like every other thing that was ever conceived in the mind of God, is perfect.

4. **It applies to those only who meet the conditions.**

But if the plan of salvation is so simple that no one need fail, it is not thrust upon any one. God saves no one in spite of himself. Man today, like Adam, has power to reject God's Word. The promise is, "He that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out;" but there is no promise of salvation to those who refuse or fail to come. If there is a "whosoever" test for salvation, there is just as surely a "whosoever" test for condemnation. Since God has made every provision for the salvation of all men, upon man rests the responsibility for not being saved.

5. **It ends with death.**

The grace of God was a thing of the past with the rich man who had opened his eyes in hell, though he plead pitifully. "Behold, now is the day of salvation." The idea of a second chance after death is an awful delusion, for the teaching of the Bible is against it. The "resurrection of life" is for those only "who have done good," while "they that have done evil" are doomed to "the resurrection of damnation." This corresponds with what the psalmist says: "The wicked shall be turned into hell; and

all the nations that forget God." There is abundance of time for salvation now, but none beyond the grave. Those who, like the foolish virgins, put off the day of salvation until that midnight hour when the cry will be heard, "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh," will find as they knock at the door for admittance that the door will be shut.

There are a number of things connected with the plan of salvation which are not only important for doctrinal study but also as gauges by which we may test ourselves to see whether we have met the conditions which God has laid down in His PLAN. We will consider them very briefly:

Faith

This is defined in the language of inspiration as "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." The teaching of Scripture is that:

1. It is an essential to salvation. "He that believeth not shall be damned."

2. Without it, it is impossible to please God. "For without faith it is impossible to please him."

3. It is only the "faith which worketh" that counts before God. "Faith without works is dead."

4. It is the means through which we are justified before God. "Man is justified by faith." "All that believe are justified."

5. By it we live the overcoming life. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith."

6. Through it we get into peaceable relations with God. "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

7. We get it through coming into contact with God's people and the Word of God. "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

If the wonders of faith are marvelous, the grace and power of God in whom we place our trust are even more so. The reason why men have so little power is because their faith is so small; and the smallness of their faith is accounted for by the fact that they give so little attention to the greatness, the goodness, the power, and the faithfulness of God. He who created the universe and holds the existence of all things in the hollow of His hands; who is "so great that He fills heaven and earth and yet so small that He dwells in the heart of the believer;" who sits upon the throne of His power and His glory and discerns the thoughts and intents of every human heart; whose power is infinite and His love and His grace are as great as His power, has never broken a single covenant or proven unfaithful to a single promise which He has ever made with man. Men of great faith are invariably men of great power because all who come in touch with Him are endued with the power of the Infinite. May we join with the disciples in the prayer, "Lord, increase our faith."

Repentance

is another essential to salvation. "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." We are commanded to preach "repentance and remission of sins among all nations," assured that God "commandeth all men everywhere to repent." It is not enough merely to become willing to unite with the Church, or to give up certain things which seem distasteful to others,

or to comply with the rules of the Church and keep, in a formal way, the commandments of God. Those sins which mean death to the soul must be repented of before they can be remitted by the Author of our salvation. Repentance stands at the very gateway of Christian life and experience. The world is reeking in sin and the Church burdened with dead members because the great Bible doctrine of repentance is not preached with the fervor and faithfulness that the Bible commands. Moral reformation will come when the individual repents of his sins and gives God a chance to purge his soul of the moral pollution that can be wiped away alone through the cleansing power of the Blood. There can be no enduring social uplift except through the "remission of sins" which is promised upon condition of repentance.

Justification

means not only God looking upon man as being all right, but also the pardoning grace of God applied to the heart and the righteousness of Jesus Christ imputed and imparted to the life of the individual. God never justifies the sinner without performing the miracle of grace in his heart and making him a child of God. The cleansing power of the blood extends farther than the name—it actually cleanses.

Man is justified before God by faith. But "faith without works is dead." When a man has been so completely cleansed from sin that he appears justified in the sight of God there is such a change wrought in his soul that he will also appear upright in the sight of right thinking people. Faith and

works go together. The absence of works indicates the insufficiency of faith. No man is justified before God unless his sins have been removed. Then "how shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein?" It is significant that Paul, in reminding his people that "ye are justified," preceded that saying with "ye are sanctified."

Regeneration

Regeneration has been variously described in Scripture as "born again," "made anew," "renewed," "new creatures," "quickened," etc. Its importance is realized when we consider some of the sweeping scriptures telling about it. Here are a few of them:

"Except a man be born again, he can not see the kingdom of God."

"In Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision; but a new creature."

"He that is born of God doth not commit sin ....he can not sin, for his seed remaineth in him."

A saved man is more than a reformed sinner. He is a new man who after God is created in "righteousness and true holiness."

The Christian Church should speak out in no uncertain tones concerning the importance and necessity of the new birth. Without it there may be moral reformation, high social standing, great wealth, "wonderful works;" but there is no such thing as a man having any standing before God without becoming "a new creature." "Ye must be born again," is the message which in the power of the Spirit should be made to ring in the ears of every unsaved man.

Adoption

Sinners are the children of the devil. The "brotherhood of man" and "Fatherhood of God" extends to those only who have been "born again." There are two great families in the world. Of the one it is written, "As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name." Members of the other family are thus characterized: "Ye are the children of your father the devil." Those walking "according to the course of this world" are referred to as "the children of wrath." But God has made provision for them—on condition. To those who come to God in faith the promise is, "though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow." All who are "born again" are given the spirit of adoption, taken into God's happy family. They can say of a truth, "We have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father."

Some have been puzzled to know how one can be both adopted and born into the same family. In some homes there are children who were born into the family and some who were adopted; but never any children who were born and adopted into the same family. How is it possible for the same soul to be both born and adopted into the family of God?

In answer to this question it should be borne in mind that while adoption and regeneration are both real experiences the names are figurative. We are adopted in the sense that, having once belonged to the family of Satan but rescued from his awful bondage, we were admitted into the family of God

and made heirs to all that is coming to the children of God. We were born into the family of God in the sense that, having been "dead in trespasses and in sins," we became "new creatures," were made new, "born again," hence born into the family of God.

The Atonement

How is the new birth accomplished. Christ says that this is a mystery. Jno. 3:8. But some things about it are clear. It is distinctly the work of God. Paul says that it is accomplished, "not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost" (Tit. 3:5). Jesus Christ is "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world," and "by him we have received the atonement." "The blood of Jesus Christ....cleanseth us from all sin." In the crimson flood that flowed from Calvary there is atonement for every creature, remission of sins for all who come to God in faith for pardoning grace. "By one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified."

Redemption

(For a brief discussion of this subject the reader is referred to section three of Chapter II.)

Conversion

The literal meaning of this word is to turn. But in connection with the Christian life we are apt to be misled by this definition of conversion unless we comprehend what is involved in this turning. They who by the grace of God are turned from sin to righteousness have the miracle of grace wrought

within their souls which gives them new life in Jesus. The sum total of all that we have enumerated thus far in the discussion of God's plan of salvation, as well as that which follows in the next paragraph, is embodied in an evangelical conversion. Conversion means a complete change from sin to righteousness, from a hellward to a heavenward journey, from a child of the devil to a child of God. There are two special things which should be taught with reference to conversion: (1) It is essential to salvation. (2) It means a change in heart, a change in the use of the tongue, a change in the use we make of our pocket books, a change in affections, a change of masters, a change in everything that affects our life purposes and plans. As in the case of repentance, there is a dearth in preaching on true conversion.

Sanctification

Salvation saves from sin in time, and from the results of sin in eternity. God's plan of salvation includes more than the matter of getting people to heaven after they die; it also involves the cleaning up of the life in this world. This phase of the work we call "sanctification." Sanctification, or the setting apart of the life to God, involves two things: (1) dedication to the Lord, (2) a cleaning up of the life. The first belongs to us, the second is the work of God. "How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" Every child of God needs to know that without "holiness (sanctification—R. V.) no man shall see the Lord."

As the holy life is to be considered at length in

a succeeding chapter, we shall refrain from a discussion of it here.

God's plan of salvation is wonderfully comprehensive. May we never cease to praise His name, never cease to "worship Him in spirit and in truth," for His bountiful provision for our well being both here and in eternity. Above all, may our lives present a daily living witness of what this plan of salvation does for a poor human soul.

Questions

1. What is meant by a "plan of salvation?"
2. If God's plan includes all men, why is it that not all men are saved?
3. Since those living in Christian lands are more highly favored than those living in heathendom, is not God therefore "a respecter of persons."
4. Distinguish between adoption and the new birth; between conversion and regeneration; between justification and sanctification.
5. Discuss atonement and redemption.
6. Of the nine doctrinal subjects considered in connection with the plan of salvation, if you were called upon to emphasize one which at the present time needs more attention than any of the rest, which would it be? Give reasons for your answer.
7. What would be the results if God's wonderful plan of redemption were more widely and more thoroughly known?
8. Why do you call this a perfect plan?

CHAPTER VII

CHRISTIAN ORDINANCES

Walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.—Luke 1:6.
Keep the ordinances, as I delivered them to you.—I Cor. 11:2.

The Christian Church, like every other organization, has its rules of order. Here, under the direction of Infinite Wisdom, there is a safeguard thrown around the children of God designed to keep them on the green pastues and by the still waters of the bread and water of life, and certain ordinances designed to typify and to memorialize the most vital principles of the Christian faith.

An ordinance has been defined as "an established rite or ceremony;" a Christian ordinance as "an earthly ceremony with a heavenward meaning." These ordinances having been instituted by divine authority and wisdom, they merit our most thoughtful consideration and faithful obedience. Here are a few thoughts which should be born in mind as we consider these heaven-ordained provisions for our spiritual well being:

1. **They were instituted by divine authority.**

One of these—Marriage—was instituted of God in the creation. Three—Baptism, the Communion, and Feet Washing—were commanded by our Savior. Three—the devotional Covering, the Christian Salutation, and the Anointing of Oil—are taught in the writings of the apostles who were especially com-

missioned to bring the Gospel of Christ to all people. And whether these disciples brought the Gospel of Christ before the people "by word or our epistle," they spoke by divine inspiration and authority, and it is literally true that the things that they wrote were the commandments of God. Read Acts 9:15 and I Cor. 14:37.

2. **The merit is not in the symbols themselves, but in obedience to God and in the vital Christian principles which they typify.**

Thus water baptism, the Christian successor to the priestly consecration under the law and a symbol of the baptism of the Holy Ghost, teaches us the idea of separation from the world and consecration to and installment into the visible body, the Church. It is but "the answer of a good conscience toward God." The bread and the cup in the communion mean but a few crumbs and a few drops for each individual materially, but spiritually they typify the Lord's broken body and shed blood, a united body of believers in Jesus, a most impressive witness to "the Lord's death till he come." So with the other ordinances named. They stand for something vital, but in themselves they are but symbols. Being conceived and instituted in divine wisdom, the keeping of them is of vital importance to the Christian Church.

3. **These ordinances should be literally observed by all believers.**

There is no salvation in the keeping of them. A person may go through the motion of obeying them all and still be a lost sinner. Salvation comes alone "by grace through faith." Nevertheless we

are not justified before God when we deliberately disobey His Word. It is God's will, His command, that we obey. These ordinances are the commandments of God. "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them." Let us notice each of them, briefly:

Baptism

The Bible speaks of four kinds of baptism: Spirit, water, fire, suffering. The last two are mentioned in Scripture only incidentally, as there is no question as to their having a place in our experience provided the first two are experienced.

Water baptism is the symbol of the Holy Ghost baptism. Joel, John the Baptist, Christ, and Peter speak of them in a way that this connection is clearly gathered. Another thought we get from their writings is that while man baptizes with water, God baptizes with the Holy Ghost.

The first reference we have to water baptism is in connection with the preaching and work of John the Baptist. The form and meaning were new, as he was preparing the way for the ministry of Jesus, but evidently this was but a continuation of the priestly consecration. John, a priest, was six months older than Jesus, and had evidently been preaching about that long when Jesus, at the age of 30 (which was also the age when priests were consecrated—Num. 4:3, 35, 39) presented Himself for baptism. Here is the act of John the priest, having himself been consecrated at the lawful age, consecrating Him of whom he was the forerunner to the office of the priesthood, Christ becoming the Head of a new

priesthood, He being "a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec." It was a continuation of the same ceremony, but now taking on a new meaning, and in the fulness of time the whole order of the priesthood was changed. As the consecration was an initiation into the priesthood, so is baptism the initiation into the visible body of Christ, even as "by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body."

Water baptism should be administered only upon confession of faith and evidence of repentance. "If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest," was Philip's reply to the eunuch when he asked, "What doth hinder me to be baptized." "Repent and be baptized," was Peter's rejoinder to the question, "What shall we do?" Since baptism is but "the answer of a good conscience," it is mockery to administer it where the "good conscience" is not in evidence. As soon as applicants have brought "forth fruit meet for repentance" they are fit subjects for baptism. Every applicant for baptism should be given a survey of Scripture teaching and requirements and should show a willingness to accept them all before being baptized.

As for the mode of administering water baptism, there should be no serious question on this point.

Here are a few things to keep in mind.

1. The words "pour" and "baptize" are used interchangeably in Scripture. (Compare Matt. 3:11 and Acts 1:5 with Joel 2:28 and Acts 2:16, 17; also I Cor. 10:1, 2 with Psa. 77:17).

2. Since water baptism is the symbol of Spirit baptism, and the latter is always referred to in such terms as "poured out," "fell upon," "shed forth," or

some other term signifying effusion, why should not the symbol resemble it in form?

3. There is no hint in Scripture that this mode is not acceptable as a mode of baptism, neither are there directions given as that some other mode should be used in administering the rite of water baptism.

The Communion

This ordinance holds a place in the Christian Church similar to that which the Jewish passover held under the law. It was instituted on the night of the betrayal, at the time when Christ ate with His disciples the last legal Jewish passover. For an account of its institution read Matt. 26:26-28, Mark 14:12-25, and Luke 22:7-20. The meaning and use of this ordinance is thus set forth in Scripture:

1. It is a memorial of the broken body and shed blood of Jesus.—Matt. 26:26-28.

2. It is typical of the union and fellowship of believers.—I Cor. 10:16-23.

3. It is a witness of "the Lord's death till he come."—I Cor. 11:26.

4. It is not to be confused with a feast for the body.—I Cor. 11:17-22.

5. It stands as a warning against inconsistent living.—I Cor. 11:27-30.

The wisdom of God in instituting this simple memorial ceremony is evident from the results of a faithful observance of the ordinance. Nothing is more fruitful in bringing before the people a vivid reminder of our Savior's great sacrifice for us and our consequent duties and obligation to Him; of the union and fellowship between those who are knit to-

gether in love, held by a common faith; of the coming again of our Lord, after which the saints of God, in the mighty congregation in heaven, will be forever in fellowship in glory.

Feet Washing

This ordinance was instituted at the same time that our Savior broke bread with His disciples. It is most appropriate as a reminder of the relationship and humility and mutual helpfulness that should exist among believers. Here are a few things that ought to be remembered in connection with the observance of this ordinance.

1. It is a religious ceremony. Christ was serving as Head of the Church, not as host of a social company.

2. It was something new at the time Christ washed His disciples' feet. This is evident from His words to Peter, "What I do thou knowest not now."

3. It was not for cleanliness. They had already made full preparation for the feast. When Christ said, "Ye are not all clean," he referred to Judas. Of the rest He said, "Ye are clean."

4. It was instituted by one having authority. "Ye call me Master and Lord He said," and ye say well, "for so I am."

5. To wash one another's feet was laid upon the disciples as a solemn obligation. "If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet."

6. It was instituted with the express purpose of being kept by the disciples. "I have given you

an example, that ye should do as I have done to you."

7. There is a blessing in observing it. "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them."

8. It had a place in apostolic practice. What Paul wrote to Timothy concerning the qualifications of a certain class of women he saw fit to include "If she have washed the saints' feet." Some have tried desperately to outlaw the ordinance by wresting the words of Paul to Timothy and make it appear that this was simply an old custom because it is placed "into the category of good works." But had this been the intent of Paul he would hardly have used the word "saints" in this connection, but rather the word "needy" or "guest" or some other word indicating an absence of partiality when it comes to deeds of kindness or mercy. It is the one echo in the epistolary writings showing that the plainly taught ordinance of Jno. 13:1-17 had recognition in the apostolic Church. The plainness in which this ordinance was instituted and described accounts for the absence of mention in the epistles, as the apostles corrected abuses or misunderstandings, for there was nothing to misunderstand. Any child can understand Jno. 13:1-17. Read it.

The Devotional Covering

As we read I Cor. 11:2-16 we are impressed with the following:

1. Men should worship with their heads uncovered (4, 7).

2. Women should worship with heads covered (5, 6, 10, 13).

3. There are two coverings spoken of in this chapter—the veil and the long hair (5, 6, 14, 15).

4. Women should either wear both or discard both (5, 6).

5. The lesson which nature teaches (woman universally being obedient to this lesson and wearing the long hair) emphasizes the fact that the Christian woman should be just as obedient in wearing the veiling (14, 15).

6. Contentious men who in spite of this plain teaching insist that their wives or daughters worship with uncovered heads should be given quickly to understand that the thing for which they are contending is not sanctioned by any of the churches, Jew or Gentile, that are in line with the Gospel (16).

There have been numerous suggestions as to how we may get around wearing the devotional covering and yet not be condemned by Scripture, but the only scriptural way is to receive the Word gladly, take this as it reads, obey it literally. The blessings attending such obedience will abundantly justify the attitude.

The Christian Salutation

The Bible recognizes three forms: (1) greeting friends by name, (2) the right hand of fellowship, (3) the holy kiss.

"Greet the friends by name," wrote John to "the well beloved Gaius." It is a most agreeable as well as a distinctly helpful practice to give ready recognition to friends and neighbors as you meet them or pass them on the way.

When James and other pillars of the Church

recognized in Paul the qualities of a true man and brother, they extended to him "the right hand of fellowship." It goes a step further than mere personal greeting, being a token of both sociability and equality.

The "fervent charity" which binds the children of God together in one bond of fellowship is typified in the holy kiss. Five times in Scripture (Rom. 16:16; I Cor. 16:20; II Cor. 13:12; I Thes. 5:26; I Pet. 5:14) is this form of the Christian salutation commanded. No one who reads these scriptures with an obedient eye has any difficulty to understand what they mean. And no one in whom the love of God waxes warm enough to give him a warm affection for his fellow believers will hesitate to obey the command. It is not only the natural way of expressing affections, but a most impressive and expressive way of manifesting the feeling of love that should exist between brother and brother, between sister and sister.

Anointing with Oil

"Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church: and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord; and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him" (Jas. 5:14, 15). This instruction is in line with apostolic practice. In Mark 6:13 we read that the disciples "anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them." Much has been lost in the way of healing for men and glory for God because we have not always arisen to our

privileges in recognizing the healing power of the Almighty.

Marriage

Marriage is an institution ordained of God. It is thus defined in Scripture: "For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh. Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder" (Matt. 19:5, 6).

Following are among the things which the Bible teaches concerning marriage:

1. It is to maintain the perpetuation and purity of the human family.—Gen. 1:28; Heb. 13:4.

2. It is indissoluble, except by death.—Matt. 19:6; I Cor. 7:39.

3. Until the bond is thus dissolved, to go through the form of marriage and live with some one of the opposite sex constitutes adultery.—Mark 10:11; Rom. 7:3.

4. Mixed marriages between children of God and children of this world are forbidden.—Deut. 7:3; Neh. 13:23-26; II Cor. 6:14; I Cor. 7:39.

5. Mixed marriages between members of different denominations are unwise.—Amos 3:3.

Next to salvation, marriage is the most sacred thing that can be named. When entered into in the fear of God and in accordance with His Word, it is a bond that is stronger than law, provides for the highest well being of those who are thus made "one flesh," and as a rule determines the destiny, here and hereafter, of the two thus united as well as their posterity. It should be entered into in the spirit of

prayer, and the best part of the intellect should be employed when this question is in consideration. Those seeking companionship for their own good and for the good of the cause, look for the following:

1. One who is one in faith with himself.

2. One whose aims, tastes, and ideals of life are identical with those of his own.

3. One who is congenial, companionable, intellectually and morally worthy, physically sound enough to enter the married state.

No one should look for such ideals on the part of any one of the opposite sex without striving to attain such ideals himself or herself. If there is any reforming to be done, let it be done in the fear of the Lord before marriage.

Questions

1. What is an ordinance?

2. Why are church ordinances important? If the keeping of them is not a means of salvation, why keep them at all?

3. Explain the relation between water baptism and Spirit baptism. Which comes first?

4. If there is no saving virtue in the bread and the cup, why could we not remember the Lord's suffering and death without the communion?

5. Explain the difference between feet washing as a custom or service, and feet washing as a ceremony.

6. Discuss the value of the devotional covering as an institution in the Church.

7. Of the seven ordinances named in this chapter, which do you class as "major" and which as

"minor?" which as "essential" and which as "non-essential?" Give reasons for your answer.

8. What significance is there in calling the Christian salutation "an holy kiss?" a "kiss of charity?"

9. What importance do you place on the anointing with oil? When and by whom and for what purpose should it be practiced?

10. Are the writings of Paul inconsistent with the other scriptural references to marriage?

Outline of Christian Ordinances

Ordinance	Scriptural References	Meaning or Design of	Remarks
Baptism			
Communion			
Feet Washing			
Devotional Covering			
The Holy Kiss			
Anointing with Oil			
Marriage			

Suggestion: Let each member of the class draw this diagram on paper or board of sufficient size and carefully fill out the blank spaces.

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CHAPTER VIII

BIBLE RESTRICTIONS

Walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.—Rom. 8:1. Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth.—Col. 3:5.

God has made every provision for the safety and well being of His people. We have full salvation in the Lord whose blood cleanses from all sin. We have the Holy Ghost, who convicts the world of sin and blesses the children of God as Comforter and Guide. We have the holy Bible as a perfect and complete message from God to man. We have the Church as the Christian pilgrim's home on earth, where in the blessed fellowship of the Spirit the saints of God are strengthened and encouraged to wend their way heavenward. We have a number of Christian ordinances which strengthen our fellowship with one another and help us to appreciate the most vital Christian principles and privileges. We are favored with a number of important restrictions which help to keep the faithful upon the highway of holiness. On every hand there are heaven-inspired encouragements to do good and warnings against doing wrong.

Some people object to the idea of restrictions. Like Eve in the Garden, they see no reason why they should be prohibited from reaching forth their hands and partaking of any fruit they choose. The idea of prohibition seems to rob them of cherished

liberty. To their minds, "Thou shalt not" stands crosswise in the path of freedom.

But they forget that the dominion of the flesh means bondage in the slavery of sin; that in the wisdom of God they are asked to refrain from nothing that is not to the hurt of themselves or of others, to make no sacrifices that are not for the glory of God and the good of man; that they who recognize the wisdom of God and are subject to Him are always glad for any warnings against harm and danger which He may have to give; that such warnings and instructions become prohibitive laws to those only who at heart have their affections set upon evil. For illustration: A mother holds a bottle of attractive liquid before her children and solemnly warns them to leave it alone because it is poison. If the children are wise they will thank their mother for the information. It is a hated "restriction" to those children only who are disobedient to their mother and have their hearts set on evil. So with our Bible restrictions. There are many things in this present evil world which are ruinous to the soul, and God graciously gives His children warning. Will we be wise and heed the warning, or will we, like Mother Eve, chafe under the restrictions, believe the devil rather than God, reach out our hands, and partake to our own destruction?

Following are a number of Bible restrictions which stand out very prominently in the Gospel and which every child of God should heed:

Nonconformity to the World

The name is suggested by Rom. 12:2—"Be not conformed to this world." It is the most im-

portant and far-reaching of all the Bible restrictions. Here is a word picture of the two great bodies which the Bible says are distinctly separate:

1. People of God: "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness, into his marvelous light" (I Pet. 2:9).

2. World: "The whole world lieth in wickedness" (I Jno. 5:19).

Because of this great difference between the two, we have these admonitions: "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him" (I Jno. 2:15).

"Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world, is the enemy of God" (Jas. 4:4).

"And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God" (Rom. 12:2).

This important Bible doctrine, when applied faithfully to practical life, makes a very noticeable mark of separation between the children of God and the children of this world. Following are a few of the applications:

1. **Pride.**—"Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall" (Prov. 16:18). "Be not proud: for the Lord hath spoken" (Jer. 13:15).

2. **Covetousness.**—"Take heed, and beware of covetousness" (Luke 12:15). "The love of money is the root of all evil" (I Tim. 6:10). "Be not de-

ceived: neither fornicators....nor **extortioners,** shall inherit the kingdom of God" (I Cor. 6:9, 10).

3. **Lust.**—"Adultery, fornication, lasciviousness ....they which do those things shall not inherit the kingdom of God" (Gal. 5:21).

4. **Drunkenness.**—".....nor drunkards....shall inherit the kingdom of heaven" (I Cor. 6:10). "Strong drink is raging; and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise." (Prov. 20:1).

5. **Foolishness.**—"The mouth of fools poureth out foolishness" (Prov. 15:2).

6. **Fashionable Apparel.**—"In modest apparel... ..not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array" (I Tim. 2:9—Read also Isa. 3:16-24; I Pet. 3:3, 4; and other scriptural references pertaining to proper and improper apparel).

The important thing to remember about all these worldly spots is that it is the world that dictates them and the worldly inclined that follow. The child of God, being "unspotted from the world," can not consistently be conformed to the world in any one of them. They whose clothing, speech, business methods, associations, etc., are determined by the fashions and customs of this world are doing what Paul declares is done by those who are dead in trespasses and in sins; that is, "walking according to the course of this world" (Eph. 2:2). Every child of God is in duty bound so to walk before God and man that his language, home life, business relations and methods, social life, church affiliations and work, appearance as to clothing—are a living witness to the fact that he has taken God at His word and lives a life "unspotted from the world."

Nonresistance

This term is derived from our Savior's teaching: "Resist not evil." Briefly stated, the Bible doctrine of nonresistance is this: that we follow in the footsteps of Christ in maintaining a peaceable attitude toward every body and everything but sin, abstaining from carnal strife in every form, suffering wrongfully rather than to inflict violence upon others.

That this is the proper attitude for all Christian people is evident from the life and teachings of both Christ and the apostles.

What Christ Taught.—Christ, who is described by the prophet as "The Prince of Peace" (Isa. 9:6), and whose coming to earth was hailed by the heavenly host as bringing about the era of "on earth peace, good will toward men," justified this estimate of Himself both by His life and by His teachings. He set a perfect example of nonresistance, never using His great power in self defence, though He suffered much persecution and was finally shamefully betrayed and crucified. The life that He lived He also taught to His followers. Among other things He taught (Matt. 5:38-45; 26:52; Jno. 18:36) that His people should "resist not evil;" that they should pray for their persecutors, do good to them that hated them, assuring both friend and foe that His servants do not fight, and that "all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword."

What the Disciples Taught.—The disciples of Christ likewise taught and practiced the same doctrine (Rom. 12:17-21; I Cor. 6:1-6; II Cor. 10:4, etc., etc.) and it is significant that during the first two centuries of the Christian Church there does not

a single man of God appear in history who is also rated as a warrior.

It is not strange, therefore, that in the light of these conspicuous examples and this specific teaching, with not a breath of New Testament testimony in favor of war, that there should still be those who believe that the followers of the Prince of Peace should not engage in war in any form. Peter gave the correct attitude of Christian people when in referring to the peaceable life and attitude of Jesus Christ he said that "we should follow in his steps." The peace principles of Jesus Christ will keep us out of quarrels, out of law-suits, out of carnal warfare. "If we suffer, we shall also reign with him." For the disciples this policy meant suffering, but it also meant the winning of many souls for the Prince of Peace. The greatest and only enduring conquests are those made through the power of love.

Swearing of Oaths

Jesus settled forever the question as to whether it is right for Christian people to take the oath. He called attention to how it was under the Old Covenant and how it is under the New. This is His language: "It hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths: but I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne: nor by the earth; for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King. Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black. But let your communication be Yea, yea; nay, nay: for

whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil" (Matt. 5:33-37).

Equally emphatic is the testimony of James: "But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath: but let your yea be yea; and your nay, nay; lest ye fall into condemnation" (Jas. 5:12).

The most notable point in these two testimonies is that under the New Testament the oath is totally forbidden to the child of God. To our Savior's "swear not at all" is added James' "neither by any other oath." Some protest that this did not refer to the judicial oath, that it meant merely the profane oath. To this it must be stated that the oath permitted "by them of old time" was the judicial oath and that the profane oath was never lawful; but even if the profane oath had been allowed (which it was not) our Savior's "swear not at all" and James' "neither by any other oath" would completely wipe away any oath of any kind. It is absolutely outlawed in the Gospel. "I will that thou affirm" expresses the Gospel way of telling our story.

Secret Societies

Here are a few scripture lights against the secret lodge as it exists today:

"In secret have I said nothing" (Jno. 18:20).

"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath light with darkness.....or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?.....Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord" (II Cor. 6:14-18).

"And have no fellowship with the unfruitful

works of darkness, but rather reprove them. For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret" (Eph. 5:11, 12).

"Or if a soul swear, pronouncing with his lips to do evil or to do good, whatsoever it shall be that a man shall pronounce with an oath, and it be hid from him; when he knoweth of it then he shall be guilty.....He shall confess that he hath sinned" (Lev. 5:4, 5).

Falling under the condemnation of this scriptural light are all organizations in which organized secrecy has a part, or in which the unequal yoke exists between believer and unbeliever. Among such organizations we may name the secret lodge, the labor union, fraternal insurance organizations, farmers' unions, and every organization in which the cardinal principles of non-secrecy and freedom from the unequal yoke are violated. They should be opposed, therefore, upon scriptural grounds. Aside from this, there are a number of strong objections against all such organizations—such as false charity, undermining the sanctity of home and Church, disloyalty to Government, expense, harboring crime, etc.; but as we are addressing ourselves to Christian people, we shall content ourselves by simply showing the unscriptural act of Christian people allying themselves with such organizations. To be consistent, every child of God will steer clear of them all.

Life Insurance

There is but one legal life insurance, and that is the assurance which God gives us. All the rest are counterfeits. We can best approach the merits of

this question by meditating upon the testimony of Scripture:

"Leave thy fatherless children, I will preserve them alive, and let thy widows trust in me" (Jer. 49:11).

"It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man" (Psa. 118:8).

"I have been young, and now am old; and yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread" (Psa. 37:25).

"I will never leave thee nor forsake thee" (Heb. 13:5).

The whole Bible rings with assurance of God's faithfulness and goodness and promise to care for His own. Yet it is the business of life insurance companies to make all men (who are able to pay at least a few premiums) dissatisfied with their lot unless they have their lives insured in some worldly company. We have the following objections to this form of life insurance:

1. It is false security, as God alone can insure lives.

2. It undermines trust in God.

3. It is not a sound business investment, as on the average less than half the money paid in premiums finds its way back to the policy holders.

4. It is a continual drain upon the pocket-books of the masses, transferring yearly several hundred millions of dollars from the wealth of the public into the coffers of rich corporations.

5. It is a form of gambling, with human life as the element of chance.

6. It makes merchandise of human life.

7. It often undermines family affections.

8. It offers an unscriptural way of providing for your own.

9. Its corrupting influences have been such that courts and legislatures have been called upon to fight the work of its paid lobbies.

The whole system shows the folly of man turning aside from the sure promises of God and taking up a substitute which has covetousness for its basis.

Questions

1. When do Christian principles become restrictions?

2. What is the value of Bible restrictions? Why should Christian people give heed to them?

3. State, in your own words, the Bible doctrine of Nonconformity to the world. Does it restrict us in our Chistian liberty? Give reasons for your answer.

4. Why was the oath permitted under the Old Covenant and forbidden in the New?

5. Give five of your strongest reasons why Christian people should hold themselves aloof from war; why both combatant and noncombatant military service are in violation of the peace principles of the New Testament.

6. What are your best reasons for opposing labor unions?

7. It is claimed that Jesus was a prominent Mason. Can you disprove it?

8. Thousands of widows have been kept above want because of their deceased husbands' life insurance policies. Is not therefore life insurance a good thing?

9. What are the richest blessings resulting from a faithful heeding of Bible restrictions?

Outline of Bible Restrictions

Restriction	References	Statement of the Doctrine	Remarks
Nonconformity to the World			
Nonresistance			
Swearing of Oaths			
Secret Societies			
Life Insurance			

Suggestion: Let each member of the class reproduce this outline on paper or blackboard of sufficient size and carefully fill out the blank spaces.

CHAPTER IX

THE BLESSED HOPE

Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ.—Tit. 2:13.
Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God forever and ever. Amen.—Rev. 7:12.

The scene of our Savior's departure from earth to heaven was a most impressive one. It was here that He commanded them not to depart out of Jerusalem until they should be endued with power from on high. After commissioning them to be His witnesses in all the world He was parted from them and took His triumphant flight to glory. What must have been the feeling of the disciples on this occasion. They saw Him ascend, until a cloud received Him out of their sight. What does all this mean! They had seen Him perform many miracles, even the miracle of the Cross; but they had never seen a sight that equaled this. Though He had disappeared, they kept looking heavenward.

About this time there appeared to them, stood with them, two men in white apparel. They were angels of God, sent there to bring them this cheering message: "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven."

Did they believe it? They certainly did. Though they did not receive the spiritual discernment of the

Word until the enduement of power at Pentecost, they returned to Jerusalem and there abode in the spirit of worship and praise until that time came. The remarkable demonstration of power on the day of Pentecost was an eye-opener to the multitudes, and three thousand souls were brought into the Kingdom. It was the beginning of the work that will be completed when Jesus Christ will appear the second time in the clouds, as prophesied by the men in white apparel.

This hope—"that blessed hope," as Paul calls it —has been the Christians' consolation since the day this vision of Christ's second coming was given. Paul sums up the whole of the Christians' experience and vision as follows: "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for **that blessed hope**, and the glorious appearing of our great God and our Savior Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. These things teach" (Tit. 2:11-15).

It is this blessed hope that thrills the souls of God's believing children and heirs of glory, and makes life, for them, worth the living. Paul had a true conception of it when in the midst of trials he cried out, "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed." When upon the brink of eternity and knowing that "the time of my departure is at hand," he could look beyond the nar-

row stream which separates time from eternity and say, "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness." Stephen looked forward with the same hope, the angelic look upon his face giving evidence of the peace of God within his soul. Our Master (who drank sorrow's cup to the last dregs, was yet able to say, "I have meat to eat that ye know not of") has this message of cheer to those who are groaning under the rod of persecution: "Rejoice, and be exceeding glad; for great is your reward in heaven." "Be of good cheer," said He when telling His disciples of coming tribulations, "I have overcome the world." This hope is, as Paul tells us, the "anchor of the soul" impelling us to move forward, looking steadfastly toward our reward, knowing that our "labor is not in vain in the Lord."

Let us notice briefly a few things connected with the Christian's hope:

1. **God is faithful to every promise, and never forsakes His own.**

David says, "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me." The people of God have this blessed assurance from their Master: "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." In the midst of the storms and tempests of this life we may press forward with and brightest of hopes, for "we know that all things work together for good to them that love God." In the brightest hours of life, when the shadow of suffering or distress is for the time being cast aside, the sunshine of heaven in the soul is all the more radiant, for we know that it is only a foretaste of something still better and more glorious farther on.

Because God has proven Himself faithful to every promise, and because of the promise of greater, brighter things ahead, the hope of the Christian fills his soul with good cheer, impels him to press on trustfully, having the blessed assurance that God will be with us to the end.

2. **Christ is coming again.**

The two men in white apparel were not the first to tell about the Lord's second coming. Christ Himself tells of the time when "the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him" (Matt. 25:31). There is nothing in all the teachings of Jesus that is more clearly and emphatically taught than the fact that in the fulness of time He is coming **again.**

When the apostles went forth as the oracles of God to preach the things pertaining to the everlasting Kingdom, they made it known very clearly and emphatically that Jesus is coming again. Perhaps the clearest of all these prophecies recorded in the epistolary writings is that found in I Thes. 4:16-18 where among other things Paul says, "The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God." The same emphatic truth is taught by the other disciples, and not a hint is to be found anywhere in holy writ that the Lord's coming will be otherwise than an actual, personal, literal coming again, for the purpose stated in connection with the prophecies concerning His second coming.

The second coming of Christ should be regarded with all the more seriousness because there will be millions who will not share the joys connected with

His coming, nor with the blessings to follow. In II Thes. 1:7-9 we are told that "when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance upon them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ," these wicked and apostate ones will be "punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord." The same verse (Jno. 5:29) that tells of "the resurrection of life" also tells of "the resurrection of damnation." The same day that will be accounted a **"great"** day for the ransomed of the Lord, will be adjudged a **"dreadful"** day for those who at that time will be calling to the rocks and mountains to fall upon them to hide them from the face of Him who sitteth on the throne. It is a dreadful thought!—one that should impel every faithful, redeemed child of God to spare neither pains nor effort in the great work of rescuing the greatest possible number of doomed souls from such an awful destiny.

Another thing to be noted in connection with our Lord's return is the uncertainty as to the time of His coming. Christ Himself says that the day and hour are known to no man. While reading the signs of the times as they are reflected in Matthew 24 and other prophetic writings we are convinced that the time of His coming is near; yet we should not forget that the Lord's way of reckoning time—a day as a thousand years and a thousand years as a day—makes it uncertain as to the exact time according to the human way of reckoning time. All this, knowing that the time is at hand, makes it all the more urgent that we heed the Savior's warning—

3. It should make us humble in the sight of the Lord, feeling, as we must that we are not worthy of the least of all His blessings upon us.

4. It should prompt us to live to the glory of God and the salvation and spiritual uplift of fellow men.

5. It should prompt us to be His faithful witnesses, missing no opportunity to make His Word and will known to others.

6. It should prompt us to live a life of sacrifice, making ourselves "of no reputation," looking to Jesus as our example, spending our lives and our substance in the great cause of evangelizing the world.

7. "Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure."

We who know from experience what it is to be redeemed from sin, born again, filled with the Spirit and thrilled with this blessed hope, should miss no opportunity to get others within the sphere of this blessed experience, having the full confidence that our labor "is not in vain in the Lord."

Questions

1. What is the origin of the Christian's hope?
2. Discuss the results of a false hope.
3. What is embodied in the Christian's hope? How does it compare with a delusion?
4. Why and how is hope the "anchor of the soul?"
5. Is there a possibility of a man dying without hope and yet being eternally saved? Give reasons for your answer.

6. What may we as individuals do to impart this blessed hope to others?

7. What is the influence of such hope upon our lives?

8. Is your vision of the future inspiring or depressing? Why?

PART II

THE MESSAGE-BEARER

WHO SHALL BE THE MESSAGE-BEARER?

"Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" was the clarion call which rung in the ears of Isaiah. That same question is ringing in the ears of thousands of blood-cleansed soldiers of the cross today; for as we look at the millions in home and foreign lands who are as "sheep without a shepherd" the question comes home to us: "How shall they hear without a preacher?"

It is a well known fact that the world gets its idea of the Gospel from the character and lives of those who pose as its champions; also that the question of its acceptance or rejection depends largely upon the way in which it is presented. This places a two-fold responsibility upon the message-bearer: (1) that of being a worthy example for others to follow; (2) that of presenting the Gospel in a convincing, forceful, faithful, winning way.

Who then shall bear the message of salvation to a lost and dying world?

1. They who know by experience what it is to be "born again."

2. They whose life is in harmony with their profession, and whose profession is in harmony with the Word of God.

3. They who believe the entire message of the Gospel, and make it the rule of their lives to put all of its teachings to practical use in daily life.

4. They who are scripturally qualified to fill the places to which they are called, able to present

the Word of God with convincing and convicting power.

5. They who are physically and temperamentally qualified to make sacrifices, and to "endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ."

6. They who would fill a larger and more useful sphere as message-bearers than in some other line of work equally as important in promoting the cause of Christ among men.

7. They who have been purified by the Lord and set apart by the Holy Ghost for this work.

8. They in whose soul there is a burning zeal to bring the Gospel to the lost and the lost to Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord.

CHAPTER I

THE CALL

Whom shall I send, and who will go?—Isa. 6:8.
Hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us.—I Pet. 2:21.

God works through human instrumentality. We may or may not know why this plan is better than in some other way, but we know that it is so. Moses was His mediator in the days of Israel's deliverance from Egypt, John the Baptist was the forerunner of Christ, the Gospel was brought to earth through God in the form of a man, the Church is commissioned to bring this Gospel to the world. Through Peter the Gospel door swung open to the Gentiles, through Philip the light was opened up to the eunuch that he might receive it and carry it to Ethiopia, and through Paul and his companions the Gospel wave was swept into Europe.

The greatest hindrance to the work of getting God and His Word in touch with all mankind has been the lack of consecration on the part of those bearing the name of Jesus. In other words, too many so-called Christians are not on the altar, so God is unable to get hold of them and use them in His service. The Master needs workers—workers to work the home field, workers to open up the work in other fields, workers to serve as planters and workers for waterers, workers of various kinds and qualifications. As in the days of Christ, the harvest is still plenteous, the laborers still few.

In our efforts to throw Gospel light upon workers and their work we shall first take up the matter of their call. In fact, there are several calls with which we are vitally concerned and which should receive the prayerful consideration of us all. The first of these is

The Call to Salvation

This call is universal. Hear the call from the court of heaven: "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else" (Isa. 45:22). From this invitation we get two thoughts: (1) All people, in every clime and age, are included in this call. (2) The call is made by the only One who has the authority to make it and the power to make it good, and an acceptance of it is the only way to salvation. Again, let us listen to the voice of Jesus: "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jno. 3:16). This verse not only emphasizes the "whosoever" idea but it is also a reminder to all the faithful that since God made a great sacrifice to bring about the conversion of the whole world we should co-operate with Him in this great cause. Peter, writing by inspiration of God, assures us that it is not God's will that any should perish (II Pet. 3:9), and Paul adds his testimony by saying that "God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ" (I Thes. 5:9). The call to salvation is universal and for every generation. Let us do our best that all the world may get the news. God has not only sent out

the call, but through the merits of the Blood He has made it possible that all may accept, if we will.

The Call to Service

The call to salvation also means a call to service. Only let us keep these two calls in their proper order. The question, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" was heard by Isaiah only after he had been cleansed. So our call to service comes only upon the condition that we accept the call to salvation. While God may use unconverted men as instruments in promoting His cause and blessing His children (as in the case of Nebuchadnezzar and Cyrus) the fact of such service never gives them a place in the grace of God nor in the Church of God. Unconverted men should be encouraged to seek and to accept salvation before they are encouraged to do anything else. Unconverted men in the Church, especially if their intellectual qualities win for them a place of leadership, are a curse to the Church.

But all who have accepted the call to salvation have before them a call to service. "Behold, I have set before thee an open door," is true of every child of God. We are servants. It is not for us to say whether we wish to be servants or not. That point is settled. God has so created us that we can not but be servants, whether we choose to be servants of God or not. The only thing that is left for our decision is the matter of a choice of masters. The prodigal son wanted to be absolutely free; but it was only a question of time until he discovered himself to be the most servile kind of a servant, and it was only then that he came to himself. Many,

like this wayward son and like Manasseh in prison, only awaken to the fact of their slavery in sin when they begin to feel the chains upon their persons. Yes, we are all servants—"Be ye not the servants of men." "Know ye not that to whom ye yield yourselves servants, his servants ye are to whom ye obey?" "Choose ye this day whom ye will serve." Only remember this, that the service of God is the service of freedom. "When the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."

We consider, therefore, that when we are called to salvation we are called from the service of sin and Satan to the service of God; that when we accept freedom and salvation we accept service in the fold of Christ. When therefore one volunteers for mission work or service in one of the institutions of the Church it is not a volunteering for service but a volunteering for service of a different kind from that which he had been rendering. Indeed, it is very risky to admit to a position of responsibility any one who has been inactive. A failure to be in the service of Christ looks like a failure to have accepted His condition of salvation. Let this fact never be overlooked—**from the time we were saved from sin we have been in the service of Jesus Christ.** All members—ministers, deacons, missionaries, teachers, superintendents, officials, non-officials, everybody—ought to be alike interested in the work of the Lord, alive in His service. Let no one imagine that because he is not a minister or missionary he is therefore not in the service of his Master. If we are not alive in the service, we are not loyal members.

Stating the same fact negatively, let us remem-

ber that service is not confined to holding official positions or doing public work. Some of the most effective work is done by obscure members upon bended knees with no one but God and self near. Consistent Christian living, Bible reading, prayer, faithful testimony in ordinary conversation, the keeping of the home befitting the servants of God, faithful attendance at church services, visiting the sick, caring for the needy, helping the public servants bear their burdens—these are a few of the many ways in which faithful soldiers of the cross may be in the service of their Master. Naturally, of course, when we are faithful in our service our tongues and hands enter into it; so that no true disciple of our Lord will long be a secret one. There is no inside religion that will not manifest itself on the outside.

The one remaining thought that we wish to give in connection to this call to service is this: Since we are called to service, let us apply ourselves diligently to the end that our service may be acceptable in His sight and count for the most in winning souls for the Kingdom. Read carefully and prayerfully I Tim. 4:16 and II Tim. 2:15.

The Call to Special Service

This may be to some special line of work, or it may be to some special field. We have a concrete illustration in Saul of Tarsus. He was called to some special line of work when the Holy Ghost said to the Church at Antioch, "Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them" (Acts 13:2). He had previously had premonitions of this call, but here was the direct call. He was

called to a special field when the Holy Ghost forbade him to preach in Asia and in a vision he was called to Macedonia. We do not all have the same manifestations of the call that Paul had, but it is the same Holy Ghost that calls, and it is through the instrumentality of the same Christian Church that the different individuals are ordained to their God-called places or sent into the field or fields as directed by the Holy Ghost. From these illustrations we gather three things:

1. God calls people for special lines of work, and through the instrumentality of the Church He gets them to the places where He wants them. (Here a caution may be needed. Some, imagining themselves to be called to the ministry or some other calling, feel called upon to take the Church in charge and make the Church ordain them, when they ought to leave this work to the Lord.) Paul was no more active after his call to the apostleship than he was before, but he did what he could wherever he was, leaving it to the Lord when he should take up the work in the line for which God had especially qualified him. And in this connection it might be well to notice that whenever God calls a servant to a certain work He also moves the Church to set him apart to that work. In every normal church we may safely look for three things when one is called of the Lord for a special work: (1) scriptural qualifications, (2) promptings by the Spirit, (3) action by the Church.

2. God gives special calls to those who are enlisted in special lines of work. This may be in some particular field without changing the nature of work

(as was the case when Paul was called to Europe) or it may be a call from some special line of work to some other special line (as in the case when, for instance, a missionary is called to do pastoral work or take up the work of teaching). In each case, if we are prayerful and faithful and patient, God will make it plain to us whether the call is of God or from some other source.

3. These calls are determined by the needs of special causes, by the circumstances of the present, and by the peculiar qualifications of the one thus called. To be called from one sphere of labor to another does not mean a failure in that which you were engaged, nor even that you are better qualified for the work to which you are now being called; but rather that the nature of the circumstances is such at this time that you can do a greater work for God in this particular place or cause.

God directs Spirit-controlled servants to labor in fields that will bring about best results. We can trust Him to direct in these matters. The only thing that we need to concern ourselves about is this: Is this the call of the Lord, or is it a call from other sources.

Another thought worthy of notice is this: Since God takes such an active part in directing the work of His servants, let us not fail to let Him have full right-of-way in our affairs. Neither our own desires, the desires of our friends, homes, occupations, nor preconceived plans of what our life-work should be should stand in the way of letting the Lord have His way with us. The supreme work before us is to do that which will count most in winning souls for

the Master and building them up in Christ. The rest matters little in comparison with this great object in life. The Lord being much wiser than ourselves, we can trust Him to choose our work for us.

The Call to Glory

It is this call which inspires us to promptness in answering the other calls just considered. It is natural for man to want to see what is ahead. God has wisely withheld the details of the future from our knowledge, but He leaves no earnest seeker after His will in doubt as to the rewards ahead. Millions have been thrilled with the invitation, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom." The invitation, "Come up higher," has encouraged millions to press on over hard places and in the midst of heavy burdens that otherwise might have fainted by the way. It is the call that moves us to press on and do our best for the Lord and the Lord's cause. It is a positive help and strength to be able to say, "This one thing I do; forgetting those things that are behind, and reaching forth unto those things that are before, I press toward the mark." It is that blessed hope, the "anchor of the soul," that spurs on to nobler effort, to greater heights. Thank God for the call all along the line. Let us obey, unhesitatingly, every one of them.

Summary

Briefly let us summarize:

1. God calls us all to salvation; not one is excluded. This call is made unconditionally, whether we knew it or not, whether we are inclined to heed

it or not. "Few are chosen," because the many reject the call.

2. God calls to service, all who heed His call to salvation. We are not to wait for any call to special lines of work, but faithful service is expected of us from the time we enter the fold of Jesus.

3. From among those who are faithful in Christian service and loyalty, God calls men and women to special lines of work and fields of labor. This being the work of the Church as well as of the Lord, the call is made through the direction of the Holy Spirit and the instrumentality of the Church.

4. They who prove themselves faithful in service, and continue so to the end, have the welcome call of "come up higher" awaiting them at the close of life's journey.

Questions

1. What is included in the call to salvation?
2. What are we to conclude when those claiming to have answered the call to salvation make no effort to serve God and the Church?
3. What is the practical value of the laying on of hands on the part of the Church?
4. When one claims to have a call to preach, and the Church neglects to recognize the claim, whose fault is it? Give reasons for your answer.
5. Discuss the subject, "The Call and its Cost."
6. How does the call to glory affect the other calls?
7. How many of these calls have you had?

CHAPTER II

QUALIFICATIONS

(Natural)

To every man according to his several ability.—Matt. 25:15.
Unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required.—Luke 12:48.

We accept the self-evident truth that God never calls any one into service without also qualifying that person for the place desired to be filled. The diversified gifts with which God has endowed His people is both an evidence of the wisdom of God in preparing His servants to perform the many different kinds of work and meet the numerous problems confronting the Christian Church. The boldness of Peter, the tenderness of John, the caution of Thomas, the quietness of Andrew, the judicial mind of James, the business-like qualities of Judas, and the single-mindedness of Paul were all needed in the apostolic Church. Do you put a question mark after the name of Judas? Yes, Judas' gold, like Peter's tongue, got him into trouble—but not until he forgot to keep it on the altar.

Having before us the great work of bringing the Gospel before the whole world, we shall confine ourselves in this chapter to the qualifications needed for this kind of service, keeping in mind especially the qualities belonging to the ideal missionary. Naturally our subject is too large for one chapter, so we shall consider the natural qualifications in this

chapter, reserving the consideration of spiritual qualifications for the next chapter. To fill the largest place in the work of the Church in bringing Christ to the unsaved and the unsaved to Christ, the following qualities should be in evidence:

1. **A Strong, Healthy Body.**—Other things being equal, the more vigorous the body, the greater the power for good. We trust that we may be understood in this matter. We know of people of feeble health who are a power for God in the service of God and man; but this does not change the other fact that with like consecration and Christian loyalty they would be still more useful if their otherwise splendid qualities would be reinforced with vigorous health and physical strength. Good health means much for good service. Many a prospective missionary has been compelled to give up his life plans because of ill health, and many missionaries on the field have been practical failures for similar cause.

2. **A Good, Moral Character.**—This borders on the spiritual phase of the missionary's qualifications, but not necessarily so. We know of people who are at least an average in morals and respectability and who make no pretensions to Christianity. But whatever you may have to say about the moral man out of Christ, it is inconceivable that any one should be an immoral man in Christ. "True as steel" should be the record of every worker in every time of temptation. When we speak of "good moral character" we speak of the character of the man or woman who is habitually pure in thought, chaste in speech, upright and honest in business life, above reproach in conduct toward members of the opposite

sex, with constitutional contempt for everything that is low and vulgar, vile and impure, pusillanimous and silly. The man who delights in stale, smutty yarns is not to be trusted in the company of members of the opposite sex, though he acts like an angel in mixed company. The aim of every pure-minded man or woman is so to live that his or her mind may be photographed at any time without reflection on the character, or the speech reproduced in writing and make edifying reading in public or private. Follow this rule, and there will be no spot on your character or your record.

3. **An Intellectual Mind.**—God despises no man because of a lack of native ability; but that does not change the fact that a strong intellect, on the altar, is able to accomplish more for God than a weak one. This is not to discourage the one-talented brother but rather to emphasize the fact that the five-talented brother has a responsibility which the less talented brother does not have. Just now there comes to mind a certain religious denomination that owes its growth largely to the fact that it makes a specialty in getting its most talented men into the ministry. The brightest of intellects are not too bright to shine for God. They are needed in the forefront of religious endeavor at home and abroad.

4. **A Normal Mind.**—Some who are talented intellectually are disqualified from an intellectual standpoint because their minds are not normal. You are never sure whether you can depend upon them, for they are not well balanced. Their usefulness is greatly marred because of occasional breaks or attitudes which spoil more than all the good they may

do. The first thing to ask about a man's intellectual capacity is, Is he normal? The normal mind is capable of development, whether in the beginning it is small or large.

5. **Social Powers.**—The magnetic touch means much in personal work. Friendship draws, lack of it repels. When you add the fervor of the Holy Spirit to a naturally amiable disposition, you have a power which means the winning of many souls for God. Thaw out, if you would do your best for God. Prove yourself friendly, if you would have friends, remembering that it takes the love of God shed abroad in the heart to enable you to develop a sociability which enables you to draw souls heavenward rather than earthward.

6. **Music.**—Music is the voice of the soul. There is a charm and a power about it that has no substitutes. The mission worker with a musical voice and a capacity to lead and to get others enthused in song has a great asset in his favor. It is to be regretted that the modern craze for light, giddy, operatic music has unfitted the masses for real soul-stirring, worshipful singing. But the case is not hopeless. After all, there is nothing that reaches the heart like the good, inspiring, old familiar hymns with the heart-string of heaven attached to them, and the singing leader whose soul is in that kind of music has an avenue by which he can reach the souls of men that others do not possess. Neglect not this gift.

7. **Capacity for Hard Work.**—The work of the missionary calls for great hardships and self-denial. It is the hard-working missionary that accomplishes

results for God. Carey in India, Judson in Burma, Paton in the South Sea Islands, Livingstone in Africa, and dozens of other successful missionaries are all examples of the truth just stated. Who has not been impressed, when reading the lives of such great leaders of thought and action as Paul, Peter Waldo, John Wycliffe, John Huss, Menno Simons, and others who gave their lives to the cause of Christ, that along with their great faith there was also a great capacity for hard work and endurance under severest trials. It takes this stamp of character to achieve success. The missionary who seeks the easy places is a failure to start with. The worker who looks for easy places and positions of honor may have sufficient charms of person and political pull to win the plaudits of men, but in the sight of God he is but an unprofitable drone. God wants men and women who have the grit to tackle hard jobs and the capacity to stand hard work and lots of it.

8. **Steady Nerves.**—"Not easily provoked" is one of the scriptural qualifications of the bishop. It is also one of the very desirable qualities of the successful missionary. It is generally conceded that worry kills more people than hard work does. Worry comes only at the end of jaded or cracked nerves; that is, people worry because the nerves are too near the surface. Do you say that control should be left in the hands of God? Right you are; but we should give God a chance. "In patience possess ye your souls." Irritability is a positive hindrance to success in any line of work. Just now there comes to mind the case of two noted statesmen who became ene-

mies though they belonged to the same political party. The one towered high above the other intellectually, yet because he was exceedingly irritable and his opponent had steady nerves he was a mere baby in the hands of his less talented opponent. It shows what an advantage it is to have the capacity of self control. It is the faithful, hopeful, cheerful, well-balanced worker that accomplishes things.

9. **Perseverance.**—A very striking object-lesson may be found in the programs of public meetings held many years ago. If you have any of that kind it would be well for you to examine a few of them. On these programs you see the names of some who at that time seemed men of promise, but they have long since disappeared from view. Some are buried in business, others out of the Church altogether. On the same programs are to be found the names of those less prominent some ten or twenty years ago but who are now at the head of congregations. Look over your ten-year-old list of volunteers for home and foreign mission work. Where are they today? Some on the mission field, but by far the greater number—somewhere else.

Examine into the causes, and you will find that one great word that figures in these causes is perseverance—or the lack of it. Some were in the work for life, others—till they changed their notions. It is the former kind that won results. PERSEVERANCE is a qualification that belongs to every successful worker for God.

10. **Application.**—It is possible to be possessed with great courage and perseverance to stick to your

task to the end, and yet waste much time and energy for want of proper application. Every worker, to do his best, studies his problems. He meets his problems best, and solves them most effectively, who diligently applies himself to his task, prepares to meet it, and meets it intelligently. Close application to the issue at hand means much in the way of overcoming obstacles and accomplishing best results. Let us study and work to a purpose.

11. **Hopefulness.**—One man undertakes a task and expects to fail. Another undertakes a similar task and expects to win. While it is possible for both to be disappointed, it is more likely that both will get what they expect. Hope is not only the "anchor of the soul" but it is often the life-saver that keeps us from drowning on our voyage of life. We are not talking about the blind optimism which expects a future state of the world which the Bible says will never be in this age, but rather that real optimism which takes God at His Word, believes all that He says, and presses forward hopefully though the immediate future seems dark. Stephen saw through the shower of stones and beheld the glory beyond. Paul looked beyond prison walls and beheld the crown of righteousness sure to come. John Bunyan looked beyond the Bedford jail and saw greater triumphs ahead. Our forefathers saw beyond the dreary present which meant a martyr's death for most of them, and we now rejoice in the results of their hope. Let us go forth with full faith that our "labor is not in vain in the Lord;" that souls will be won for the Lord, and that at the close of life's pilgrimage we will come to the great harvest

field with many golden sheaves to gladden the Lord of the harvest.

Questions

1. What is a missionary?
2. Who are called to do mission work?
3. What is to determine whether we shall be home or foreign missionaries?
4. Is God or man responsible for our qualifications for mission work?
5. Distinguish between natural and spiritual qualifications.
6. There are those who refuse to give themselves over to God and the Church to be used as God and the Church direct, giving as their reason that they are "doing the best they can." What have you to say with reference to their excuse?
7. Is brilliancy a help or a hindrance in Christian service? Give reasons for your answer.
8. What has consecration to do with the qualifications named in this chapter?

CHAPTER III

QUALIFICATIONS

(*Spiritual*)

Full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom.—Acts 6:3.
The same commit thou to faithful men.—II Tim. 2:2,.

All the qualities mentioned in the preceding chapter may be possessed by unconverted people. One may be intelligent, sympathetic, generous to a fault, upright in business, morally pure, neighborly, the possessor of high ideals, and still be a lost sinner. Let us carry this point still farther. It is possible for one to have all the qualities named, and besides these be a church member in good standing morally, socially, intellectually, an actual observer of all the rules and regulations of his church—and still be without salvation. Going through the motion of being a Christian does not make the Christian. Christianity is a matter of heart experience. The things we mentioned are but the fruits of it.

Too many people mistake moral cleansing for regeneration. They see a man cleaned up morally—he stops drinking, swearing, puts away his tobacco, gives up all evil habits, professes religion, unites with the Church, and obeys its rules. People think that surely he is now a converted man. These changes are certainly excellent signs—changes that will surely take place when one degraded in sin becomes a child of God; but it is possible to go through the motion of all these things and the soul remain

dead in sin. "Except a man be born again, he can not see the kingdom of God." "In Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature." The outer life is important; the inner life essential. Read Eph. 2:5-10 and Tit. 3:3-7.

The successful missionary needs the qualifications noted in the preceding chapter; also the spiritual qualifications to be named in this chapter.

1. **"Full of the Holy Ghost."**—This was an essential requirement of all members called to official positions in the apostolic Church. It was the first qualification mentioned in connection with the setting apart of the seven deacons (Acts 6:1-6) even though their specified work was to provide for the material wants of the needy. It is important that preachers, deacons, missionaries, teachers, choristers, janitors, and all other workers in the Church be both Spirit-filled and Spirit-guided; for no matter what may be the nature of the work done or position filled, these officials come in touch with the people and exert some kind of an influence. When the Spirit of God takes possession of the soul, quickens the life, and directs the energies of the individual it means much in the way of strengthening the other qualifications needed for efficient service.

2. **Fellowship with God.**—This suggests the power of influence. It means much to be in fellowship with saints, especially those whose influence is of the decidedly positive and helpful character. Fellowship with God is even more essential to spiritual life and growth. It is possible to live spiritually for a time without being in sight of a fellow believer,

but it is not possible to live spiritually even for a limited time without fellowship and companionship with God. We sometimes sing—

"Walk daily with your Savior
In fellowship of love,"

which means much in the way of protection against the power of temptation as well as encouragement to live a consistent Christian life. They who know themselves to be in fellowship with God are not so liable to be led away with divers temptations as those who see nothing but earth in their surroundings. "Walk daily with your Savior," and you will walk the upward path of purity and righteousness. They who make this the rule of their lives will never darken the doors of theaters, movies, saloons, gaming rooms, etc., except on missions of rescue.

3. **The Prayer Life.**—The test of this kind of a life is not the public prayer, for one may be ever so fluent in saying public prayers and still be very neglectful in keeping up the touch with God in frequent, fervent prayers when no one besides God and self has any knowledge that such prayers are being offered. Christ in the garden, wrestling with the Father in prayer; Daniel by the window that was open toward Jerusalem, though he knew that such a course would land him in the lions' den; Moses before God, counseling with Him in matters of responsibility; Hezekiah laying Sennacherib's letter before the Lord, when that haughty Assyrian had threatened his life and his kingdom; Elijah upon Mt. Carmel, the Church in Mary's house, Stephen in the dying hour, and many other instances might be cited as throwing light upon the prayer life. Prayer

is the breath of God within the soul seeking its own. There is an inseparable link between prayer and power. See that you get the habit. "Men ought always to pray." "In everything, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God."

4. **Ready to Obey.**—This is one of the **essential** qualifications of the Christian workers. "If ye love me," says Christ, "keep my commandments." Again He says, "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I commanded you." On one occasion He says, "Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" John puts the matter very forcibly when he says, "He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him." So we want to speak about obedience not merely as a very **important** thing, but as a very **essential** thing in every believer. It is important that every teacher of righteousness recognizes that, for a number of reasons:

a. There is no promise in the Bible for the disobedient.

b. All teachers, in order to do effective work, must be "ensamples to the flock."

c. It is only they who "from the heart" are obedient to God and hence obey Him out of conviction, that have the power to drive conviction into the hearts of other people.

d. They who themselves are impressed with the necessity of obeying God fully in all things are sure to preach the whole Gospel faithfully to others.

So much with reference to obedience to God. It is also important, and essential to the highest wel-

fare of ourselves and the cause, to be in full submission to our church. Such admonitions as, "submitting yourselves one to another," "obey them that have the rule over you," "yea, all of you be subject one to another," were not written by chance. They are the words of inspiration and breathe out the wisdom of God. That member is worth most to God and the Church who yields full and unquestioning submission to both.

5. **Loyalty.**—Under this head we mean to make another speech on obedience, only in another form. The loyal worker sees, in the first place, that he belongs to a church in which he can be thoroughly loyal to both Christ and the church of which he is a member. The idea of "any church will do" has no scriptural support. Any church will do in which you can, in preaching the whole church creed, at the same time preach the entire Gospel of Jesus Christ. If not, then either your church needs a working over or you need to look for another church home. That point settled, the loyal worker is faithful in reading and obeying Scripture, in church attendance, in church support, in active Christian service, having an attitude of submission to God and the Church, willing to be used in whatever capacity that God and the Church may see fit to use him. Brother, is there any flaw to your loyalty?

6. **Burden for Souls.**—Paul was willing to be accursed from God if by that means his kinsmen in the flesh might be won for God. There was an overflowing desire in his heart to win as many as possible for the Master, and this accounted for his self-sacrificing life and constant strenuous service.

When his work at one place was at an end, he immediately looked for other open doors through which he might walk and win other souls for God. It was his great burden for souls that made him the tireless worker that he was. He was one who never lost his "first love." In this we do well to remember the admonition, "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ." Paul was certainly a follower of Christ in the matter of being burdened for the welfare of souls. Was it not this burden that moved Him to leave the courts of glory and spend His life and service in the great cause of salvation? It takes this burning, fiery zeal, this great passion for the rescue of lost and dying souls, that prompts a man to do his best for the Lord. "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."

7. **Lover of Good Things.**—Paul mentions "a lover of good men" as one of the qualifications of the bishop. We have in mind the same qualification for missionaries, only in the application of this quality we wish to include other things besides people. The true missionary has a conception of that which is purest and holiest and best. He recognizes and appreciates noble qualities in others, and longs for the purest and best to shine out through his own life. He longs for "the deep things of God" as revealed in His Word, and he is constantly searching in this sacred message for things not yet fully brought to light in his own life and experience. He loves associations that are pure and good, and the work of helping fellow men to a higher plane of liv-

ing calls for his most enthusiastic efforts. The practical value of having a clear conception of that which is best and noblest and true is evident from the fact that we invariably encourage and foster in others the things which we admire. Thirsting for the best and longing to help others in seeking and maintaining the very best and highest of life's blessings, there is in every lover of good things a zeal and an inspiration and an uplifting influence that is not found among those who are more indifferent in the matter of attaining the best to be had.

Questions

1. What is spirituality?
2. Distinguish between walking in the flesh and in the Spirit. Rom. 8:1.
3. Describe what you conceive to be an ideal missionary.
4. What does the Holy Ghost contribute to the life of the worker?
5. What has sacrifice to do with the life of the missionary?
6. How may the Church help the missionary, and the missionary help the Church?
7. Do results justify the sacrifices required for successful missionary work?
8. To what extent are God and man responsible for the qualifications enumerated in this chapter?

CHAPTER IV

THE HOLY LIFE

Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people.—I Pet. 2:9.
And holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord. —Heb. 12:14.

In considering the qualifications of an ideal Christian worker one's mind is naturally drawn to the holy life. It is one of the most beautiful and fascinating themes that it was ever the privilege of man to consider. Let us thank God for the privilege, and take an hour in studying this subject together. The theme means all the more to us as we remember that—

1. **God commands it.** Hear the words of the Lord: "Be ye holy, for I am holy." "Be ye holy, for I am the Lord your God." Without holiness, we are told, "no man shall see the Lord." Peter refers to the people of God as "an holy nation." It is idle for an unholy man to count himself a child of God, for the Bible makes no such provisions.

2. **It must be experienced to be appreciated.** When Christ said, "I have meat to eat that ye know not of," He set the others to wondering what He meant, but they could only guess. So with the holy life; many who discuss it are simply guessing at their subject, for they are without experience. The child of God may point to heart experience and speak of a richness of soul which they who are without experience know nothing of. There is an unholy

and an empty rattle about the testimony of people professing holiness when their lives contradict their professions.

3. **It admits into the fulness of joy.** In this connection it is well to notice one of the devil's big lies. Somehow he has gotten many people to look upon the holy life as being an agonizing life. To have "a good time," they look toward the world; to get to heaven, they admit that it is better to be a little pious. Many young people have been deceived with this satanic vision. They long for "social gatherings" without any religion in them. To them, religious services are "dry" unless there is plenty of entertainment connected with them. But even the driest of religious services can be endured with patience if their afternoons of frolic and fun are not interfered with too seriously. With them it is, the world for pleasure, religion to get to heaven on.

It is not hard to determine in whose den such ideals were hatched out. The holy life is something serious, but it is more; it is intensely soul-satisfying, as every one will tell you who has had a real taste of it. What it means for its possessor will be told later in the chapter. Only the child of God can speak of an experience described as a "joy unspeakable and full of glory. Fulness of joy is the happy lot of those in whose hearts the love of God abounds.

4. **It ennobles the life.** The path of holiness is the path upward, for it is the path of Christian growth in all that pertains to purity and godliness and usefulness. They who are habitually pure and true and virtuous and sympathetic and upright and

God-fearing and worshipful enjoy a continual growth along every line of Christian virtue.

5. **It enhances usefulness.** Worldlings usually seek their kind when they wish to indulge the desires of the flesh, but when they want real solid counsel they invariably seek the counsel of those whom they believe to be consistent in Christian life. It was to men like Joseph and Moses and Elisha and Daniel that men in trouble would go for help. The same is true today. When real work is required, it is the holy men of God who are called upon to do it.

The holy life is the only kind of life worth thinking about for pleasure, for growth, for purity, for health, for fellowship, for usefulness, for final reward, for anything worth having. Many who recognize this truth are missing life's richest blessings because they are not doing as well as they know.

Let us notice briefly what the holy life includes:

1. **Godliness.**—Man is a finite likeness of an infinite God. "Be ye holy, for I am holy," is simply an invitation on the part of the Infinite for finite man to rise to his privilege and duty. To be godly means to be like Him in purity, in goodness, in love, in righteousness, in every Christian virtue.

2. **Spirituality.**—"Who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit," is the way Paul describes those not under the bondage of sin. Spirituality means more than correct Christian living; it means to be Spirit-filled, Spirit-enlightened, Spirit-led, Spirit-controlled. It means that we look at all things from the heavenly viewpoint, that our affections are set

on things above, that we deny the flesh and live to the glory of God. It means, also, a number of other things that will be discussed in succeeding paragraphs.

3. **Consecration.**—"Ye are not your own; for ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body." "Present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God." In this case "holy" might have been spelled "wholly" without changing the meaning. When Christ said, "I must be about my Father's business," He not only laid down a rule of life for Himself but for every consecrated child of God as well. Body, mind, soul, we are the Lord's; and our lives, to be consistent, are "holy, acceptable unto God."

4. **Obedience.**—Obedience is a necessary part of consecration. No man has ever been dedicated to any cause but that he was subject to those who had the cause in hand. No man has ever been consecrated to God without being obedient to God in heart and life. As soon as Isaiah was cleansed he was ready to respond to the call of the Lord. Obedience is one of the marks of "holiness unto the Lord." The Holy Spirit is given "to them that obey him."

5. **Purity.**—"How shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein?" "If we walk in the light as he is in the light.....the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." When Paul described the Christian people and their duties (Tit. 2:11-14) he first spoke of them being "purified" before he said anything about them being "a peculiar people." Pure thought, pure speech, pure associations, pure social relations, pure business ethics, pure

desires, pure worship, a record pure from unrighteousness and uncleanness, a life "unspotted from the world," all belong to the holy life.

6. **Given to Prayer.**—It is as natural for the child of God to pray as it is for the natural man to breathe. No breath, naturally, means death. No prayer means spiritual death. Looking Bibleward, God talks to us; looking heavenward, we meditate upon what He said to us, talk to Him in the language of prayer. The closer our connection with God the oftener and more fervently we pray.

7. **Worship.**—This also is a vital part of the holy life. "Holiness unto the Lord" means not only a sanctified soul but also a soul filled with reverence and adoration for the Sanctifier. In this connection it is well to remember that one can not be a worshiper of Jehovah and a worshiper of some idol or idols at the same time, even if this idol is so important a being as self or pelf. "Ye can not serve God and Mammon." "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." Idolaters may worship many gods, (even the God of heaven, as did Pharaoh and Nebuchadnezzar) but the true worshiper of the great Jehovah can worship no other gods but Him. Another thought worthy of notice is that we invariably become like the Being or beings or objects that we worship. Thus, the true worshiper of God becomes more and more like Him, shining more and more in the beauty of holiness.

8. **Righteousness.**—While there may be upright living without holiness, there can be no holiness without upright living. When the Holy Ghost has possession of a business man's heart you will detect

no deception, no chicanery, no sharp business deals about this man's life. A lying tongue, a covetous heart, and a holy life are never found to belong to the same individual. The man who must be watched in his business and social relations needs conversion, to say nothing about sanctification.

9. **"Joy in the Holy Ghost."**—We are coming back to an old subject. Happiness belongs to the sanctified life. Even in the midst of the greatest tribulations the children of God enjoy a comforting peace to which the world is a stranger. "In the world ye shall have tribulation," said Christ to His disciples, "but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." This promise reaches us in the midst of the bitterest persecutions: "Rejoice, and be exceeding glad; for great is your reward in heaven." "Great peace have they which love thy law." Stephen, in the midst of the crushing stones, showed by the angelic look upon his countenance that he had the joy of heaven in his soul. And it was not simply a joy which vanished with the passing of the fleeting things of earth, but a joy which he carried to the other shore. If then the Christian's joy is a thrilling reality even in the midst of tribulations, it is none the less soul-satisfying when there is peace physically as well as spiritually.

But we insist that it is worse than folly to seek our pleasures in the forbidden fields of foolishness and ungodliness and unrighteousness. As for pleasure, that is simply emotion. Two men testify that on a certain night they had the time of their lives—one at a prayer meeting, the other at a grog shop. They may both be sincere, and one may have en-

joyed himself as much as the other. The pleasures were simply emotions they experienced as they came in touch with something that satisfied—for the moment. But there still remains the important fact that back of these emotions was something that left its impress upon the soul—the first a heavenly influence, the second a hellish influence. The first was the joy of the Holy Ghost, the second a cup of pleasure that leaves its bitter dregs. Holiness not only fits the soul for the eternal courts above but in this life contributes to a fullness of joy.

10. **The blessed Hope.**—We have already devoted a whole chapter to this subject. We refer to it here, because it belongs to the holy life. No man has ever been thrilled with the consciousness of the celestial glory to come but whose soul was also filled with a most delightsome pleasure. The thought of "at thy right hand are pleasures for evermore" brings a foretaste of these pleasures to the one who meditates upon them with a fervent hope here.

Is the holy life worth the living?

There remains one more question that may be on the minds of some: **How attain and maintain the holy life?**

We will answer this question briefly by saying that if we comply with God's conditions we need not be concerned about the experience. Our part is to believe, to accept, to obey. God's part is to dispense the blessings. In Acts 5:32 we are assured that God will give the Holy Ghost "to them that obey him." The trembling jailor was assured that if he believed in the Lord Jesus Christ he should be saved. Peter assured the inquirers on the day of Pentecost that if

they repented and were baptized the gift of the Holy Ghost would be a sure thing. The Bible is full of assurances that if we simply take God at His Word and obey Him it will be well with us both here and hereafter.

Questions

1. Give definition of Bible holiness.
2. What are the characteristics of a holy life?
3. Compare worldly pleasure with the "joy in the Holy Ghost."
4. Compare self-righteousness with the "righteousness which is by faith."
5. What is gained by living the holy life?
6. What is lost by giving up a life of sin?
7. Why are there so few who appreciate living the consecrated life?
8. Compare the life of the unsaved moralist with the life of the "sinner saved by grace."
9. If all professing Christians lived the holy life, what would be the effect upon world evangelization?

CHAPTER V

HELPS AND HINDRANCES

Behold, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse; a blessing if ye obey....a curse, if ye will not obey.—Deut. 11:26-28.
Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.—I Thes. 5:21.

The things mentioned in this chapter may be helps or hindrances to the worker and the cause, depending upon circumstances, and upon the attitude of the individual. We shall notice them but briefly, as the reader has access to a fuller discussion of them in other books.

Support

We are dependent and interdependent creatures. The human mind is so constituted that it craves the sympathy and support of others. In what form this support is to be desired or given—sympathy, prayers, physical comfort, money, helpful instructions, etc.—depends upon circumstances; but whatever the form may be, the moral support conveyed through sympathetic interest is quite as helpful as any material aid that can be mentioned. The average worker feels more like throwing his whole life into an enterprise when he feels that he has the support of others than when he must reflect at all times that he is doing a "thankless job" and with the results doubtful.

This is but natural. We are human, just as

God has created us. Even the stout-hearted Paul "thanked God and took courage" on one occasion, and on other occasions thanked his brethren for giving him aid. Support means encouragement and encouragement means strength. Elijah was not justified by getting under the juniper tree, but the fact of his being there showed the possibility of a strong man being put out of business for the Lord because of lack of adequate support at the hands of his fellow laborers. Doubtless God had a purpose in thus making His creatures interdependent.

But there are circumstances in which support is a real hindrance. There are people looking for financial support from others who would be worth more to God and man if they would see to getting their own finances. It is so easy for us to forget that our real help comes from the Lord, and that our responsibility for providing for our material support ceases only when we are so fully occupied in direct work for the Lord that it is physically impossible to earn our material support and at the same time attend to our spiritual duties. Self-reliance is an important factor in successful Christian work. We are always safe in figuring on this: When the Lord calls us to a certain work, and we are faithful to the call, the kind of support we will get, material and otherwise, will be the kind which God knows will bring best results under the circumstances. The promise of God is, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." We can take this promise at face value and press on.

Education

There are several reasons why a practical educa-

tion enhances the usefulness of the worker. "Knowledge is power." A trained mind accomplishes more than an untrained one. Knowing how means much in the race of life. Preparation for special service fits one for the duties of that specialty. Training helps one to become methodical, thoughtful, reserved, resourceful, talented, prompt, skillful, and increases the power of endurance. And whether this training is had in a school between four walls or in the school of experience, the facts are the same. These facts are so well known that they need only to be mentioned to impress us with the importance of making adequate preparation for our calling. Parents should see that their children get the training, and young people should be diligent in improving the excellent opportunities afforded at the present time.

But this is not a one-sided question. The side which we have given is complete, and without modifications; but some have acquired what people call an education, and both they and the world would have been better off if they had never seen the inside of a school. Let it be understood, in the first place, that the atmosphere which permeates a higher institution of learning is quite different from the air which the masses breathe. It is easy, therefore, for a young man or woman to be educated so far away from their former associates and church that they are completely out of touch with them and therefore their influence and usefulness are impaired. Another deplorable fact is that many schools are saturated with liberalism, which has made shipwreck of the faith of many young people. These facts emphasize

the importance of two things in connection with the education of our young people:

1. That they be kept in the closest possible touch with their home church and associations while attending school away from home.

2. That great care be exercised in the selection of the school, making sure that the standards and ideals of the school square up with the standards and ideals of the Bible and of the Church.

Marriage

"Marriage is honourable in all." It is an advantage to Christian workers, where they choose wisely and well; a disadvantage, when they are unfortunate in their choice of companions. Following are a few points to take into consideration:

1. Under no circumstances should the instructions of the Bible against mixed marriages be disobeyed.

2. Choice of life companions should be made not only among those who are "of like precious faith" but those also who have views of life similar to our own and whose convictions and fitness takes them into the same occupations. There has been many a misfit in marriage because one was missionary inclined while the other's tastes and convictions led to other pursuits in life.

3. Care should be exercised that the choice is not dictated wholly by the fact that here are two whose life plans take them into the same field. This is important, but there are other things more important.

4. Hasty engagements, as well as hasty marriages, are unwise.

5. A promise of marriage is most sacred. Many who would otherwise have been useful in the service of God have had their lives blasted because they broke engagements because of the charms of others who were nearer to them.

6. It is better to remain unmarried all your life than to be mismated.

7. Consult the Lord at every step.

Settled Convictions

Decision of character is a positive help in any one's life. Many have failed in life because they never quite knew what they wanted. No sooner had they made up their minds what they were going to do than another notion struck them and their plans were entirely changed. This unsettled, changeable, fickle, cross-purpose, wavering, wandering policy of life is fruitful of the worst kind of failure. Our young people should seek early in life to form settled habits, living to a fixed purpose. The young man or woman who, having prayerfully considered life's problems and opportunities, carefully studied his or her peculiar talents and environments, and after proper counsel and guidance decides upon a life course and makes preparations for it, has a decided advantage over those who follow the "hit or miss" way of doing things. The worker who makes a life work of what he undertakes accomplishes more than does the one of like talents who changes work with every change of the wind. The worker with settled convictions who is never changed in principle and

not easily changed with reference to plans, is one who can be depended upon for substantial service. "Be sure you are right, and then go ahead," is good advice. It squares up with the words of inspiration, "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good."

On the other hand, it is possible to make this very admirable trait of character an actual hindrance to the best interests of the cause. What would have been the result had Paul, on the Damascus road, refused to listen to anything but to go on in his course? or, later in life, when warned not to preach in Asia, would have decided that since preaching is a good work he would keep on preaching in Asia? What would have been the result had Moses insisted on claiming the crown of Egypt? or, later in life, when he heard the message from the burning bush, would have insisted that since he was so old he would just keep on herding flocks as long as he could crawl? Many have taken just such a course in life. They have fastened themselves to a farm or a trade or a profession, and all that God or the Church may say does not budge them from their determination to go on just as they had planned for life. No one who is fully upon the altar of the Lord is so fully rooted to cherished plans (however excellent and praiseworthy these plans may be) but that he is willing to change at the voice of God and the Church.

Keep your ear heavenward and Churchward, if you would keep your soul healthy and your life open for usefulness in its highest form.

The Bible plan on this question is conceived in divine wisdom. This is the dispensation of the Holy

Ghost. The overseers are set apart to their work through the ministration of the Holy Ghost. The church that recognizes this Holy Ghost power and authority will in turn be recognized by the Almighty Spirit. The members who recognize this plan of Providence respect those whom the Holy Ghost has set over them and in turn, placing themselves into an attiude of perfect submission to the Holy Spirit and the Spirit-guided Church, find themselves in positions where they can be of the greatest possible service to God and the Church.

Occupation

The minister who said, "My business is to preach the Gospel; I farm for a living," gave voice to a very vital Gospel principle. We get our sustenance from the earth. We owe our life and service to God. No one should ever get away from the divine edict, "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread." That does not mean that it is wrong to accept financial support while engaged in the work of the Lord, but it does mean that every able-bodied worker approved of the Lord is a hard-working man or woman.

Our business is to serve the Lord. That is a duty that belongs to every twice-born son and daughter of God, regardless of what may be his place in the Church. Our service, like our salvation, is free. We are the Lord's, "bought with a price." When the Lord calls we should do like the fishermen of Galilee, respond immediately and without question. No matter how far the call may reach—to the kitchen, to the farm, to the shop, to the home

community, to neglected nearby communities, across the plains or across the waters; to the ministry, to the school room, to the mission station, to other church institutions—let us immediately and unhesitatingly obey the call, being assured only that the call is really from God. Our business is to serve the Lord. That is life's occupation.

Then we have another business—secondarily, of course, but our business just the same—"In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread." It should be a part of our life plan to provide ways and means of providing for ourselves and our own, materially as well as spiritually. If the Lord calls away from secular employment, so that it is not possible to earn our bread, the Lord will also make provisions for our bodily sustenance, according to promise. But wherever there is an opening let us not make ourselves chargeable to others when we can relieve them of that burden. There is a blessing in it for us as well as for the cause.

Our occupation as workers for the Lord should in no way be confused or entangled with secular callings. Some look at it in this way: "Your business is to be a preacher or missionary, mine is to engage in some secular calling. It is your business to work for the Lord, it is my business to make money to support my family and yours; your business to be a consecrated child of God, I don't need to be so particular about it." That kind of a view of life has done all kinds of mischief. The Lord's work is for everybody and is to be in no way connected with life's avocations one object of which is to provide for material support. The Lord's work

is no more the minister's or missionary's business than it is the business of any other church member. The only difference there ought to be among members is that while some are so exclusively engaged in the direct work of the Lord that they can not possibly earn their own financial support others are in position that they can make money and help bear the financial burdens of those who are deprived of that privilege. This does not lessen the obligations of money-makers toward those workers who are deprived of the privilege of making money, but it does help people to keep from commercializing Christian work and justifying worldliness and indifference on the part of those not so fully occupied in the direct work of the Lord.

Our business is to serve the Lord. Let us do it with our whole heart, go wherever the Lord calls, and stick to it to the end.

Summary

Thus we might go on indefinitely discussing the helps and hindrances in the lives and labors of faithful workers. Space will not permit of an extended discussion, but a brief summary may be a help in the way of making the most of our helps as well as steering clear of hindrances.

It is a positive help to every missionary—

1. To know that there are others whose sympathies, prayers, and pocketbooks are enlisted in the same cause.

2. To be the possessor of an education which especially fits him or her for the line of work in which he or she is engaged.

3. To have the spirit of consecration, self-reliance, and energy needed for successful work.

4. To be either well mated in the marriage relation, or unmarried rather than unequally yoked together with unbelievers. There are certain lines of Christian work that can be done better by unmarried than married people.

5. To have a record which could be truthfully described in the language of Paul to Timothy: "From a child thou hast known the holy scriptures."

6. To be the possessor of a mind that is not easily changed, and yet pliable in the hands of God and the Church.

7. To know how to make his or her own living when occasion requires.

8. To have the story of the Gospel at tongue's end.

9. To be armed with truth and talent, and consistent living, to the end that gainsayers may be silenced and seekers after truth may receive what they desire and need.

10. To live a life of freedom from every sin and alliance with worldliness, in any form.

It is a positive **hindrance** to every missionary—

1. To be so dependent upon others that dependence upon God is lost sight of.

2. To be educated out of touch with the masses, especially the common people.

3. To be mismated in marriage.

4. To be unequally yoked together with unbelievers in social or business relations, or in any ways entangled with the affairs of this world.

5. To have only a scanty knowledge of the Bible and little taste for reading it.

6. To be fickle-minded so as to be blown about with every wind, or so set in his or her own ways that the voice of neither God nor the Church can change it.

7. To have a record that belies and overshadows all good professions.

8. To be weak in faith or wavering in church loyalty.

9. To be a lover of ease or pleasure, an admirer of the dazzling things of this world.

10. To have the mind only, and not the heart and soul, in mission work.

Questions

1. When is a blessing from God a help? a hindrance?

2. What do you understand by "blessings in disguise?"

3. Discuss the theme, "Preparation for Service."

4. Discuss proper and improper marriages.

5. How may we know when the Lord calls us to a special line of work?

6. By what means may we succeed in getting all our young people upon the altar of the Lord?

7. When the Church opposes my plans, what is my duty?

8. Is there such a thing as "conflicting duties?" Explain.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS FOR MISSIONARIES

> Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.—II Tim. 2:15.

The question may arise in the minds of some, What place has a book that is largely doctrinal in a mission study course? We answer: Our Savior's Great Commission to the Church is largely doctrinal. There are three things which the missionary must know to accomplish best results: the Bible, the field, and how to adapt himself or herself to environments so as to bring the message of the Bible with strongest appeal to the people who are to be won for Christ and salvation. This book is intended to cover part of this ground. And now, in conclusion, may we submit for your consideration the following suggestions:

1. **That you make a prayerful effort to get the Bible on the end of your tongue.**

This can be done, in time, by forming the habit of daily Bible reading and meditation, by putting into daily practice, what you have learned, by acquiring the habit of ready testimony. All these things have the effect of familiarizing us with the Word and giving us the capacity of quoting Scripture readily and accurately. The advantages of having a ready command of Scripture are immeasurable. The Word of God is referred to in Scripture as "the

sword of the Spirit." The more readily we can handle this weapon the greater our power in "convincing the gainsayers" and winning souls for the Master.

2. **That you studiously and prayerfully apply yourself to the task of making your daily life conform to the Gospel which you proclaim.**

Naturally the life of the missionary is accepted as an interpretation of the Gospel which he brings. As the world sees the daily life of the Christian it is of immense advantage if this life is a correct interpretation of what the Bible teaches. This thought has been touched upon in preceding chapters, and is here repeated for emphasis.

As an illustration showing the importance of this point, let us suppose a case. We might adapt the illustration to any body of Christian people, but as in all probability these pages will be read by more Mennonites than any other class, we will fit the speech to them—that is, inconsistent members among them.

Let us suppose that a small body of Mennonites are appointed missionaries to some heathen country; that upon their arrival there the following conversation takes place with a prince who had previously spent a number of years in America. He asks:

"Who are you?"

"We are a band of missionaries who have come to bring you the Gospel."

"What church do you represent?"

"We are Mennonites."

"Mennonites? What do they believe?"

"Among other things, we believe in living the holy life."

"Then why are you not more prayerful, devout, God-fearing; and why do you take so much delight in the things which your God says are wrong and sinful? What else do you believe?"

"We believe in nonresistance."

"If you believe war to be wrong, we will expect you to quit warring with your mouth. What else do you believe?"

"We believe in nonconformity to the world in dress."

"Do other American churches, and other Americans that belong to no church, believe in this?"

"Not many of them do."

"Then why do you, who believe in nonconformity, dress just like those who say that they do not believe in it? What else do you believe?"

"We believe that the righteous will spend eternity in heaven and the unrighteous will spend eternity in hell."

"And do you actually believe that and yet make so little effort to tell the lost world about it? Why are you so indifferent about it?"

How much better it would be, both for the cause of Christ and for the influence of these missionaries, if this chief could make this kind of a speech to his people:

"Friends, I spent years in America and knew these people there. I know them to be true as steel. You can depend upon every word they say, for they never say anything but the truth. Their life is like

the Gospel which they preach. I advise you to listen to their story."

May our lives be such that not only supposed heathen princes but everybody that knows us well can give us that kind of a recommendation.

3. **That you remain hidden in Christ.**

It is impossible for the faithful worker to apply himself to his task year after year without results. The promise is, "Your labor is not in vain in the Lord." Sometimes, as in the case of John the Baptist, the success is so marked that people begin to sound the praises of the faithful worker for Jesus. There is where the successful worker needs to set himself like steel against the deceptive influences of flattery. "Never lose sight of the cross." Many have made an excellent start in the Christian service and accomplished great things for God—only to fall victims of flattery, nursing their reputation rather than working for the Lord, loving the praises of men rather than giving their lives in the cause of leading men to sound the praises of God. Like John the Baptist, we should never think of anything but to be a "voice" for God, pointing souls to Jesus, and spending our lives in His service.

4. **That you remember your calling.**

The missionary is the mediator between God and the lost world. Our work is to bring lost souls and Christ together; also through labor and prayer and influence to keep them together. There are many things connected with the missionary's life which tend to discourage the faint-hearted. The depravity of man, the ingratitude of many for whom we made sacrifices, the criticisms of friends who

misunderstand our motives and our circumstances, persecutions for righteousness' sake, the weariness of the flesh, our own shortcomings, and many other things might be mentioned in the way of enumerating discouragements. But the more completely we are absorbed in our work the less these things disturb us. The more fully our hearts are set on winning souls for the Master the more fully in love with our work we remain. Think of the transformed lives in time, the golden sheaves at the Master's great harvest at the end of the world, and the glad hallelujahs in eternity, and you have inspiration enough to stick to your job to the end of your life.

5. **That you keep your eye on the practical side of life.**

Dreams have their place, but day-dreams are not worth entertaining. The world that is just aching for the Gospel and praying that some missionaries might come to teach them the way of salvation does not exist. Even a genuine conversion does not do away with a body of flesh that needs to be kept under and held under subjection. When we are sent forth as "lambs among wolves" let us never forget that both we and the people with whom we labor are human beings, and need watching and praying for, in order to be kept in line with the Gospel. Let us face the world as it is, obey God's commandments and remember His promises, live a practical life, and we have the right to expect practical results.

6. **That you keep your affections set upon things above.**

Sometimes one who is betrothed, because of improper associations with others, loses his affec-

tions for his fiance and proves unfaithful to his vow. Missionaries, like other Christian workers, are sometimes estranged from the cause of Christ because of too intimate associations with the world. Many have "left their first love" because of worldly associations, so that after years of service they are estranged from God and the Church—or at least cooled off to an extent that their services are of an inferior and ineffectual kind. Read Jas. 4:4. So while our feet should be kept upon the earth (until God sees fit to remove them) let our affections and our conversation be in heaven. It takes the heavenward look to keep the soul filled with affections for things above.

7. **That you remember "the four alls" of the Great Commission.**

It was the assurance of Jesus that "**all** power," in heaven and on earth, is committed unto Him.

Acting upon this authority, He commissions the Church to teach the Gospel to "**all** nations," to "preach the gospel to every creature." Our work is not done until "the glad tidings of salvation" has been brought to the ears of every man, woman, and child in every nation.

That no one may get the idea that our work is done when we publish the name of Jesus (usually, Jesus the man) throughout the world, Christ is careful to command us to teach "**all** things whatsoever" He commanded us. The whole Gospel, including all the Savior's commandments, must be taught, obeyed by ourselves, and enjoined upon all men everywhere. The greatest curse of the modern Church is a com-

promise religion—a christianity with the commandments and the blood of Christ left out.

The fourth all is another assurance. Jesus will be with us "alway, even unto the end of the world," provided we are faithful in obeying His command to evangelize the world.

Questions

1. What, in your opinion, are the missionary's greatest needs?
2. Why should missionaries make this their life work?
3. Name some dangers besetting the life of the missionary.
4. Discuss the theme, Joys and Sorrows of the Missionary.
5. How may the great Gospel field be more fully supplied with laborers?
6. Is it possible to evangelize the world in the present generation? How?

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